RECORDS OF ARMATHWAITE PRIORY

Ainstable, Cumbria c.1200-1552.

Benedictine Nuns

Edited by Harry Hawkins

Editor's Note

This collection of references to Armathwaite priory has not been checked and reviewed by another editor and the layout, presentation, content and composition, mistakes and errors are entirely my responsibility.

Harry Hawkins
January 2026

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My thanks are due to all those who have helped and advised me on the long road of discovery into the history of medieval religious houses from the beginnings of an idea to ‘do something’ about Shap Abbey and the completion of *Records of Shap Abbey*[1] to this compilation of *Records of Armathwaite Priory.*

The late John M Todd for his initial advice, guidance and support and for acting as my editorial mentor, to Dr Peter Franklin who not only translated but also transcribed and translated unpublished medieval deeds for me, to Ann Stuart for her research in the National Archives and British Library, the staff of the Cumbria Archive Centre at Carlisle, Canon David Weston who allowed me access to the volumes of *Monasticon* in Carlisle Cathedral Library and lent me a copy of David M Smith’s *English Episcopal Ata 30: Carlisle 1133-1292.*

I have also used records of the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle Cathedral and of the Diocese of Carlisle lodged with the Cumbria Record Office, Carlisle, and I am grateful to the Trustees of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, the Surtees Society, the Chetham Society and the Canterbury and York Society for the entries in the *Records* have been extracted from their publications.

Finally a word of thanks to those groups and societies that asked me to talk to them about the priory and the nuns; planning such talks concentrates the mind wonderfully and I hope that on the occasions when I know I talked for too long their ever attentive members will have forgiven me.

Harry Hawkins

August 2025

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[1] Accessible at archive.org,

Sources

MS Sources

No. 5 is the only known accessible Pre-Dissolution MS source although the *Patent Rolls* and *Chancery Rolls* are extant at National Archives.
No. 8 is a handwritten document in the Aglionby Papers, CAC/DAY.

Printed Sources.

Hutchinson (1794-97), vol ii, 189/190. Prints the confirmation charter of Edward IV (1473) in Latin and summarizes the Dissolution Survey.

Monasticon Anglicanum. John Caley, Sir Henry Ellis, Rev Bulkeley Bandinel. Eds. (1844). vol 5. Prints extracts from the Patent Rolls including the suspicious foundation charter – which is not printed in the *CPR* as the editors regarded it as a forgery. Prints *Paper Survey* of 1537 with land, tenements, tenants and rents.

Patent Rolls, Close Rolls and other Calendars. Relevant entries.

VCH Cumberland ii. Provides a Pre-Dissolution history, the editor discusses the 'spurious' charter and notes similarities with that of Beverley.

MRH. Knowles and Hancock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales,* Harlow 1953 (reprint 1994) 253, 256:-

> *The priory of St Mary was in existence by c.1200; the charter in Mon. attributing the fdn. to William II in 1089, is spurious: VCH. There may have been c.10 nuns in the 13th. C. The temporals were assessed at £10 in 1291. The buildings had been totally ruined by the Scots in 1317-18, and the lands laid waste in 1331. There were 3 nuns besides the prioress in 1537.*

Sources are given against each record.

Brief Introduction

The circumstances of the founding of Armathwaite Priory are unknown and the earliest mention of it is given in Record 1.

James Wilson, editor of volume two of the *Victoria History of Cumberland*, gives an outline history of the priory based on State records and surviving and now transcribed and printed registers of bishops of Carlisle.

T H B Graham based his article ‘Nunnery’ in the *Transactions* (1917) of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society on the *VCH*.

No other history of the priory has been written although local histories by Nicolson and Burn in *History of Westmorland and Cumberland* and Hutchinson in *History of Cumberland*, give short accounts based on what records were available to them at the time. Later guide books that include a mention of the priory or ‘Nunnery’ as it became known after its dissolution, draw on the *VCH* and the article by Graham.

As mentioned, the foundation of the priory by whom and when is unknown; the charter granted by Edward IV in 1480 naming William II as founder is not printed in the *Patent Rolls* as the editors regarded it as a forgery and neither is it printed by *VCH,* it is however printed in *Monasticon* (1844) from which the copy printed in these *Records* is taken.

One scholar who has speculated a little as to the possible origin of the priory is Sally Thompson in her book *Women Religious: The Founding of English Nunneries after the Norman Conquest*, Oxford 1991. She draws attention to several nunneries which came into being through a community of women who followed a hermit and makes the suggestion that the original name ‘Ermathwaite’ or ‘hermit’s clearing,’ implies there was a local hermitage which attracted a community of women. At some later time the local landowner gave them land at the junction of Croglin Water and the river Eden for their church.

The manor of Ainstable in which the priory stands, was granted to Adam son of Swein by Henry I. Adam died around 1159 and left two daughters as his heirs and it is not unreasonable to suggest that one or both the daughters gave the land for the nunnery. Adam their father had founded the priory of Mount Bretton in Yorkshire c. 1154, so there was a family background in giving land to religious houses.

While it is not intended to speculate beyond the above, hermitages are recorded in Cumberland and Westmorland, that at Culgaith was also held by Adam son of Swein; for a list of hermits in Cumberland see Rotha Mary Clay in the Bibliography.

Harry Hawkins
December 2025

1. Before 1200.
RICHEMUNTSIRE
"Priorattus, Ingelwde, Sanctae Mariae, Moniales Nigrae.
[Stubbs, *Gervase of Canterbury, Mappa Mundi* vol ii 441.]
Stubbs, editor of *Gervase,* does not put much reliance on the *Mappa Mundi* as an accurate table of religious houses as the manuscript is undated and written by at least two different hands. David Knowles however, discusses it and suggests that at the latest, the list dates from around 1200 which would place the foundation of the priory mid to late 12th century.[2]

2. 1200 or after
No. 56 in *Register of St Bees*
…..... Sciatis me dedisse
et concessisse et hac present! carta mea confirmasse Deo et beate Marie et sancte Bege de Coupland et monachis ibidem Deo servientibus duas bovatas terre mee in Leseschalis, illas, scilicet, que jacent propinquius terre sanctimonialium de Ainstapillith in eadem villa, inter terram suam, scilicet, et Leseschalis, pro salute anime mee et uxoris mee et animarum patris mei et
[Wilson, J., *The Register of St Bees* Surtees Society vol 126 (1915).]
Wilson suggests Leseschalis is Seascale on the west coast of Cumbria in the parish of Gosforth. The grantor is Roger Bello Campo (*Beauchamp*) who appears in the Pipe Rolls 1200-1229. The Bello Campos held the manor of Little Croglin in the parish of Kirkoswald and at one time Roger was Lord of Stafole (*Staffield*)[3], he also made grants to Wetherhal Priory. Staffield is on the east side of Croglin Water opposite the site of the nunnery. Note the nunnery is described 'as of Ainstable'. The priory held no land in Seascale at the time of the Dissolution Survey.

3. 1199-1217
[D14] Blenkarne. 'In the time of King John and before, the Thurbyes of Thursby < & the Terribye of Terrybe & and the nunns of Armythwait > held a moietye, and the Whitbies th'other moietye.
[Denton, John, 150-1] .
In the Dissolution Accounts, Thomas Johnson held a tenement and five acres of land in Blencarn of the priory at an annual rent of five shillings.

4. 1212-3. 14 John.
"On Thursday next [=21 Jun 1212], at Wigton [Wiggetun(iam)], to the nuns of Ermitethwaite in Cumberland, in respect of a gift, one mark, delivered [or *handed over*] to them by the King."
[*Rotulus Misæ anni regni Regis Johannis*, 1212-13, 14 John. (Cole, H ed.), *Documents illustrative of English History in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, selected from the Records of the Department of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer* (Record Commission; London, 1844). p234.] This gift was one of many King John distributed on his tour of the northern counties.

5. 1236-47 Grants to Priory of Wetherhal [Prescott, J E, *Register of the Priory of Wetheral,* Kendal (1897).]
a. Grant by Michael son of David de Ainstalelyt to Wetherhall Priory of half an acre of land with a toft and croft in Ruccroft between the land of the monastery of Wetherhal and the monastery of Ermynthaite. No. 162 p267

b. Grant by Michael son of David de Ainstapelit of three acres of land in Eadem refers to the land of Monialium de Hermithuait in Ruccroft. No, 163 p269.

c. Grant by Henric of seven acres and three roods in Ainstapelit, mentions 'porta Monialium de Ermitethait' ie in front of the gate of. No. 166 p272

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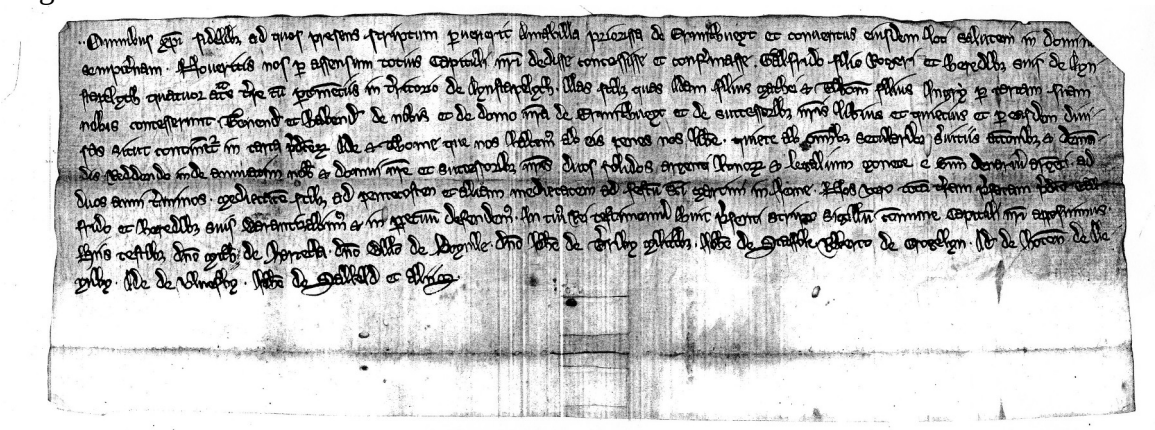
2 *Downside Review,* 1936.
3 N&B ii 426, *Reg Wetheral* no. 153n.

d. Quit claim by Alice daughter of David in Ainstapelit refers to the *bercarium* (sheepfold) of the Monialium of Ermyngthait, date as mid-1300. No. 169 p275-6

6. Late 13th century

Grant by Amabel (*Mabel*), Prioress of Ermithueyt of land at Aynstepelyth, to Geoffrey, the son of Roger. ND.



To all Christ's faithful men to whom this present writing shall come, Amabel [*Amabilla* in MS], Prioress of Ermithyueyt, and the convent of the same place, send greetings in the eternal Lord. Know that we, with the consent of our whole chapter, have given, granted and confirmed to Geoffrey the son of Roger, and to his heirs, of Aynstepelyth four acres of land in the district [*t(er)ritorio*] of Aynstepeyth, that is to say, those which Adam the son of Matthew and Thomas the son [of] Ingry [*Ingram*] granted to us by their charter, having and holding of us, and of our house of Ermithueyt, and of our successors, as freely and as quietly, and with the same boundaries, just as is contained in the charter of the aforesaid Adam and Thomas which we have from them in our possession, free and quit of all secular services, actions and demands, rendering yearly to us and to our house, and to our successors 2s in cash of good lawful money and 1d in cash in two annual terms, that is to say, half at Pentecost and the other half at the Feast of St Martin in Winter [*ie. 11 November, Martinmass*], and truly we will warrant and forever defend all the aforesaid land to the aforesaid Geoffrey and to his heirs, in witness of which thing, we have affixed the common seal of our chapter to the present writing,

These being witnesses: Sir Michael de Hertecla, Sir William de Boymle, Sir John de T(er)riby, knights, John de Stafol, Robert de Croglon, Adam de Hot(t)on of Aeynby,
Alan de Ulnesby, John de Salkeld and others [not named.]

[D/AY1/5-8(6), CAC. In medieval Latin on thin parchment, probably a copy, the only known extant medieval MS pertaining to the priory. Translated by Dr Peter Frankland (PF)]

Dated to late 13th cent by PF by handwriting; 1250x1300 by witness list.

The witness list contains names of local men who were prominent in the district from around 1253 until at least 1300. Michael de Hertecla is most likely Michael Harcla who witnessed a grant to Byland Abbey 1258x1267 [*Cartulary* no 69] and acted as sheriff of Cumberland 1285-98 and died before 1309 [*ODNB.*] He appears as a witness to a number of documents listed in N&B and *RK ii* and *RK iv.* In 1285/6 he appears as a witness with John de Terriby above, to a grant by John de Ormeshved [N&B I 515]. From 1253 until 1281 he was in dispute with the bishop of Carlisle over the manor and church of Dalston. [N&B ii 260.] Prescott [*Reg of Wetherhal* no 78 n2] says he was a brother of Andrew Harcla who was attained by Edward II but this differs from the *ODNB* and other writers who say he was the father of Andrew Hercla..

William de Boymle (Boyvill) held Thursby in late Henry III (d. Nov 1272) [Denton 429] and his son John held it in 1298/9 as this William appears to have died 1291. [N&B ii 201 and Prescott [*Reg,* no 78, n7]. William de Boyvill also held Ainstable of Richard Neville in late Henry III and when he died it passed to his

son John whose brother Edmund sold it to Andrew Harcla [J Denton 87]. He was a witness to two grants to Lanercost Priory [*Cartulary* 222, 224].
John de Terriby (Tarraby, Teeribi) was witness with among others, John, son of John of Stafole, to two grants of land in Ainstable to Lanercost [*Cartulary* 73, 74] which are dated to 1222(1230x1256). In a third grant to Lanercost [*Cart.* 230, d. after 1273x1293] he appears with Robert of Croglin. He also appears as a witness to grants to Wetherhal, [*Reg* nos 78, 83,] and for another two with Michaele Hartcla, then sheriff of Cumberland [nos.110 and 111].
Robert of Croglin appears as witness to a grant to Lanercost [*Cart.* 271, d.1294] as steward of Gilsland and to another [*Cart.* 302 d.1255x1289] with John of Staffhole.
The five men, Michaele de Harctecla, William de Boyville, John de Terriby, Roberto de Croglin and John de Staffol appear together as witnesses to two other grants to Wetheral [*Reg* 190 d.1285x98, 78 d. 1260x1285]. That these five witnessed a number of the grants to Wetherhal Priory and Lanercost Priory, this one surviving deed for Armathwaite shows considerable support among the local gentry for the nunnery and probably at the time, from the monks of Wetherhal; it suggests strong links to Wetherhal.

7. 1280 x 1310.
The prioress and nuns of Armathwaite request 'a .. in Glosefel… Endorsed she is to have a writ to the justices… to deliver'(?)
[NAC SC 8/340/16035. This petition is damaged and is tentatively dated by the handwriting. Referenced by Summerson, *Medieval Carlisle,* vol 1, 84.]

8. 1291
The prioress was summoned to answer a plea of Henry de Crofton to acquit him of the service which Hugh de Crofton and Johanna his wife owe for a free tenement held of the prioress in Thoresby.
[ND. Quoted in Defendant's Evidence in a dispute in Chancery between Richard Lowthian Ross (Plaintiff) and Francis Aglionby (Defendant) in DAY/7/4. 19th cent.]

9. 1291.
Taxation of the clergy
Diocese of Carlisle
Priory Ermithwaite 10. 0. 0.
[*Taxatio Ecclesiastica,* Record Commission, 1802. Copy].

10. **1296**
10 Jan. …. acknowledgement of receipt of procurations ordered by papal legates of the 6 marks each paid by the bishop and prior of Carlisle, the abbots of Holm Cultram and Shap, the priors of Wetheral and Lanercost, and the nuns of Armathwaite. 10 January 1296**.**
[R L Storey, *Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395,* 269 (Cant&York Soc.)]
This entry appears with several others dealing with papal legations in 1295/6 and 1370/1.

11. 1298
Pope Boniface VIII issues decree *Periculoso* which applied the law of enclosure to "nuns of every community or order, in every part of the world, both collectively and individually".[4]

12. 1300-01
Cumberland – A de Crok and L de Trik were involved in a case of novel disseisin which John son of Hugh le Madrun ? defended against Annabel Prioress of Ermathwaite and Henry le Furber concerning property in Carlisle.

[4] For discussion of the resistance by English nuns to the decree see Elizabeth Makowski, *English Nuns and the Law in the Middle Ages,* Woodbridge 2011, chapter 1. For a fuller account see also reference in footnote 2 page 11. it is not known whether this decree was enforced in Carlisle diocese.

[*Patent Roll* {C66/120 m.13d} 28 Edw I] Transcribed and translated by Ann Stuart for the editor.[5]

13. 1302.
Letter from the bishop to Prior and Chapter of Carlisle, Sub-collectors of the papal tenth. In consequence of the devastation wrought by the Scots he has obtained the sanction of the principal collectors for the remission, in some cases of a third, in others of the whole, of the taxation levied on the churches of his diocese.
[*Register of John Halton,* Pt 2, 195]

14. 1317
Sept. 9. Licence for the Prioress and nuns of Ermittwayth to acquire in mortmain lands, tenements and rents to the value of 10*l.* a year. By K.
[*CPR Edw II* vol 3 21]

15. 1317
Sept 28. Grant during pleasure to the nuns of Ermynthwayt, co. Cumberland, on York. whom much loss has been inflicted by the king's Scotch enemies, in relief of the state of their house of sufficient pasture for their beasts in the forest of Inglewode. By p.s.
[*CPR Edw II* vol 3 28]

16. 1318
Taxation of the Clergy.
De persona ecclesie de Aynstaplith xij*s* xi*d.*
[*Register of John Halton.* Pt 3 194]

17. 1319
Taxation of the diocese of Carlisle
Temporalia priorisse de Grimthueyt non taxntur quia totaliter sunt destructa.
[*Register John Halton,* Pt 3 189]
Same for Lanercost.

18. 1331
16 October. Petition to King and Council by the Prioress and convent of Armathwaite.
The Prioress and convent of Armathwaite state that they have been so ruined by the Scots that they are reduced to dependence on alms for their sustenance, request that they might be pardoned £10 which they owe the king, for victuals bought from John de Louthre and his companions in the time of his father.
Endorsed. It seems to the council, if it please the king, that it would be alms on the part of the king, for the great losses and destruction that they have suffered through the Scottish war, to pardon the said sum. It pleases the king.
[NAC SC 8/45/2230; *CPR 1330-4* 191. Parliamentary Petition 2939]

19. 1331
16 Oct. Pardon to the prioress and nuns of Ermitliwait, co. Cumberland, whose lands and rents have been very greatly wasted and destroyed by the war of

[5] Ann Stuart writes - 'The case is not mentioned in the Calendar for the Patent Rolls for 28 Edward I presumably because it is not substantive.' She continues - 'Novel disseisin was one of the petty or possessory assizes created by Henry II (the others were mort d'ancestor and darrein presentment} which remained in force until 1833. It was a quick way of dealing with cases of unfair ejectment and was successful because it was simple.' Book: Donald Sutherland, *The Assize of Novel Disseisin,* Oxford 1973. Can be accessed at archive.org. Also referenced by Summerson, vol I, 84, although mistakenly he calls the prioress 'the abbess'.

Scotland, of 10*l* due to the king for victuals bought by them in the late
king's reign at Carlisle. By pet. of C.
Mandate in pursuance to the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer. [*CPR 2/20/2024Edw III* Part II, 191].

20. 1334
12 July. Interdict pronounced by the bishop and personally accepted by M William de Kendale, archdeacon of Carlisle. His relations with Alice de Culwen, a nun, cause public scandal. He is to have no further communication with her, under penalty of 100 marks.
[R L Storey, *The Register of John Kirkby 1332-1352 and the Register of John Ross 1325-32,* vol I 262 (C&Y Soc. Vol 81.)]
Alice de Culwen was probably of the de Culwen family of Workington and a member of the Armathwaite community given its proximity to Carlisle.

21. 1346
10 May. Order to the collectors of the tenth and the fifteenth in the county of Cumberland to supersede the demand for the tenth and the fifteenth from the religious, ecclesiastical and laymen, in reply to their request that they be pardoned the remit of the tenth and fifteenth as several manors, towns, hamlets and places in greater parts of the county have been burnt and totally destroyed with the corn, animals and other goods by invasion by the Scots so they have nothing to cultivate their land or sustain themselves. Then long list of places in Cumberland including Hamelton in Aynstapelyth called ' le Dale' in the parish of that town.
Abbreviated entry. The priory held land in the hamlet of Dale and thus its destruction would have a serious affect on the economy of the priory.[6] Croglin, Kirkoswald, Renwick are also listed.
[*CCC 20 Edw III Pt I,* p30.]

22. 1356
2 Sept. Will of Lady Agnes, wife of Sir Robert le Denton, ...the nuns of Armathwaite, 10s
[R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton 1353-1362***,** 144 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88)]
Also mentioned is Lady Cecil de Hermythwayt who is left 2 cows and was probably the prioress. The Dentons held the manor of Ainstable at this time.

23. **1359**
1 Jan. Will of John de Salkeld of Maughonby …The prioress and her sisters, 40s.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton 1353-1362***,** 231 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88)]

24. 1362
25 Feb. Will of Richard de Ulnesby, rector of Ousby … the nuns of Armathwaite, a cow at Ousby.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton 1353-1362***,** 434 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88)]

25. 1362
25 August. Election of the prioress of Ermythwayt. In the name of God amen, the priory of Ermythwayt(e) in the diocese of Carlisle lately being vacant through the death of Lady Isabel, the last prioress of the said priory, we Cecily Dryng(e) the sub-prioress, and the other nuns of the said place, wishing to provide a future prioress for the same priory, assembled in the chapter-house of the said place on Thursday next after the Feast of St Bartholomew last past in the year of our Lord 1362 [*=25 August],* and having discussed amongst ourselves and the said nuns concerning the provision of a future prioress at length, having previously held an election by ballot we agreed unanimously, Lady Katerina de Lancastre a fellow-nun [“commoniali”] of the said house being excepted and we do choose the said lady Katherine de Lancastre. She herself, as the future prioress

[6] See Appendix A, for property in Dale.

of the aforesaid house and we notify the venerable Father in Christ and the Lord, the Lord Gilbert, by grace of God Bishop of Carlisle of this and the others whom this matters concerns, by those present seal with the common seal of our aforesaid house, given in our chapter-house, the day and year of our Lord abovesaid.
Confirmation of the said election and appointment of Lady Katerina de Lancastre as prioress of the said priory, as is clear, and be it remembered that on the 2nd day of September, namely, on Friday next after the Feast of the Decollation [ie. beheading] of St John the Baptist in the year, etc, 62 [*ie 1362*] the aforesaid election was presented to the said venerable father in the chapel of his manor of Rose which the said father examined he graciously making good the faults in the same and he appointed the said Lady Katerina she being send on ahead as so chosen as the prioress of the said house entrusting the care and administration of the spiritualities and temporalities of the said place to her who having been so appointed made obedience to the said father.
To the archdeacon of Carlisle for the installation of the same Lady Katerina and be it remembered that on the said 2nd day of September and in the year of our Lord abovesaid he wrote to the Archdeacon of Carlisle to assign to the same Lady Katerina a stall in the choir and a place in the chapter of the said priory, etc.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton, 1353-1362***,** 487 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88.) Translation. The text here is that given to the editor by Robert Storey when he was working on the register, it is much reduced in the published edition.]

An alternative English spelling for the Lady Katerina is Katherine. The de Lancastres were a prominent local family in Westmorland. This is the only record of a bishop being notified of the election of a prioress for the priory.

26. 1363

February. Proof of age of John son of Alice late wife of late Thomas de Kirkbythore.
List of jurors includes 'John Warde the younger, aged 52 years, agrees and says that in the same year he had a daughter Alice made a nun in the priory of Ermythwayt.
[C*al IPM 37 Edw III vol XI*, 474]

27. 1368

10 June. Proof of age of John son of Richard de Hotoun Roof.
List of jurors includes: 'William de Vaus of Caterlen, aged 43 years, agrees and says that in the same month he had a sister Alice made a nun in the priory of Ermythwayt, and that is 21 years ago and more.'
[*Cal IPM 41 Edw III* 181]

28. 1374

18 November. Will of Thomas de Anandale, rector of Asby, dated 18 November 1374. ...The nuns of Armathwaite, 20s.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395* 317 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96)]

29. 1377

13 May. Will of William de London, citizen of the city of Carlisle. The nuns of Armathwaite, 3s. 4d.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395* 465 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96)]

In no. 495 of *The Register*, Joan de London who was most probably the wife of William, left a hood of black cloth to Joan de London, a nun, and also pledged 2 copper pots. It is most likely that Joan the nun, was a member of the community at Armathwaite and a relative.

30. 1379

16 January. Will of Roger de Salkeld. Burial where God pleases. …The nuns of Armathwaite 6s 8d.
[R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395* 505 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96)]

31. 1386

8 December. Will of John de Dounthwayt, dated 8 December 1386. … The nuns of Armathwaite, 40s.

[R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395* 643 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96)]

He also left two hermits of Cockermouth 6s 8d to be divided equally between them. This is the only known reference to hermits at Cockermouth.

32. 1446. Sir John Denton enfeoffed the manor of Ainstable to William de Moore, vicar of Ainstable. In his turn William enfeoffed Thomas Dacre, 6th Lord of Gilsland and Phillipa his wife, and William Marshall, vicar of Kirkoswald.[7] The conveyance was challenged by later Dentons but William de Moore swore an affidavit dated 9 January 1448, that it had been Denton's intention that the manor be passed to Dacre.[8]

The Dacres were a powerful family in north Cumberland, the chaplain to the brother of Thomas Dacre, 2nd Lord Dacre (1467-1525), was probably Hugh Dacre who was a priest, was said to also be chaplain to the nuns of the priory.[9]

33. 1467-1473

ND. Petition. To the right Reverent ffader in God the Bysshop of Bathe and Wellis Chauncel'r of Englond

Humble (sic) sheweth unto youre goode and gracious Lordship yr Oratrix and Bedeswoman the Prioris of Armatwate yn the counte of Cumberland the which priore is of the foundacon of oure soverayne Lord the kyng and his Nobill progenitors is bot to the value of xiii s iiii d by yere and iiii wemen of religion and their servauntes to be susteyned with the same That where as oon dame Johan Layton prioris and predecessor affore ye seid suppliant be covyn betwyx her and William Atkynson havyng the covent (sic) seall under their kepyng made a lesse for terme of xvi yere under the covent seall of a cheffe [chief] ?lesse[10] of the same priorie yeldyng to the same dame Johan and her successors ii s The which mess' is worth by yere xxvi s viii d And the covent of the same place at the same tyme understandyng that the said mess' shuld haffe bee (sic) letyn to ferme to haffe borne the vere valew and upon trust thde[11] of the said deede of lesse was sealed with the covent seall And so your said suppliant and her sisters have not sufficiant of lyvelihood to susteyne theym uppon to kepe their devine servys as they ought to do in so moch that parte of theire lyvelihood by their predecessors is lette to ferme without the value under the same affore rehersed the which is to the uttermost undoyng of youre said suppliant and her sisters withoute youre gracious socur and helpe to theym be shewith in this behalffe wherfore please it yr goode and gracious lordship the premisses to have in consideration and to graunte a writte of sub pena direct to the said William Atkynson comaundyng hym by the same to appere affore the kyng in the courte of his Chauncerie at suche day as pleasith yr lordship to lymette ther indifferently to be examined of and in the premisses accordyng to lawe right and conscience and this for the love of God and yn way of charite

Pleg' de pred' Johannes Wilson de London Gentilman
Henr' Powetrell de London Gentilman

Endorsed 'P coram R in canc' sua in Octav' sancti Johannis Baptiste[12]

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7 CAS C DHN C/1/1.

8 HNP DUL C/1/1. See Angus J L Winchester, *John Denton's 'History of Cumberland'*, Surtees Society, vol 213 and CWAAS record Series vol XX, 87, n360. John Denton claimed Dacre 'extorted' the manor from Denton

9 M A Clark, 'Reformation in the Far North: Cumbria and the Church, 1500-1571, *NH 32*, 78.

10 First letters illegible but from the context is surely "lease" (AS)

11 Unfortunately, I could not read this word (AS)

12 The Nativity of St John the Baptist is 24 June; his beheading was 29 August. The octave would be the eighth day after one of those dates, probably the first. There is no year date for this document although it is probably from the second half of the fifteenth century judging by the hand and the language used, (AS). In which case the bishop of

[Pledges for the above John Wilson of London Gentleman [and] Henry Powetrell of London Gentleman
Plea before the King in his court of Chancery in the Octave of St John the Baptist.
[TNA C1/45/299] Transcribed by Ann Stuart (AS)

34. 1473

9 April. The king to all to whom etc., greetings,
Know that we have learnt from the lamentable report of the prioress of the nuns of the house or Priory of Armythwhayte in the County of Cumberland, situate and established near to the Marches of Scotland ["marchias Scotiae"], in what manner the aforesaid house or priory, which exist by the reason of our renowned ancestors, once kings of England, and by our patronage, has been entirely ruined and laid waste by our enemies and adversaries the Scots in its monastic buildings, precincts, and other buildings, and has been plundered of its possessions, sacred relics, church ornaments, books, and other jewels,
And what is worse, all the Charters [or *Deeds* in general], writings ["scripta"], Gifts, Latent Patent, and other evidences and muniments concerning the said priory and the possessions of the same, given to and bestowed upon the same priory by the said ancestors of old, have been burnt, removed or otherwise carried off by our said adversaries,
And thus a great part of the aforesaid possessions has been withdrawn, taken away and held back from the same house or priory, and for the same reason the consequence, standing and income of the same house or priory have been diminished, to such an extent that now the prioress and nuns being in the aforesaid house or priory do not have the wherewithal to live, or to maintain, perform or bear the cost of the divine office, divine services, hospitality, and other good works which from former times were instituted, founded and established at the same place, in a praiseworthy fashion, as they should be able to do, so that it will be inevitable that the same prioress and nuns must give up the aforesaid house or priory within a short time because of poverty, and leave off the divine office and the aforesaid works at the same place entirely, and the vows of our said ancestors, their founders, will be completely forsaken and defrauded in effect, unless they should be charitably relived by us,
And in respect of the same, the prioress and nuns have humbly beseeched us that we should wish graciously to show our royal munificence ["munificentiam regiam"] to them in this matter,
And so that the same prioress and nuns may intercede and pray for the good standing of us, and of Elizabeth our consort, and of Edward, our dearest firstborn son, and for our souls, when they shall have gone towards that light [ie., *when we have died*], and for the souls of our said ancestors,
And also so that the vows and intentions of our same ancestors may take due effect,
Of our special grace, wishing graciously to provide for the quiet and peace of mind of the said prioress and nuns, and of their successors, we do accept, approve, ratify and confirm, for our heirs, as much as in us lies, the title, estate and possession which the same prioress and nuns have in the aforesaid house or priory, and in the lands, tenements, rents and possessions, and their other appurtenances whatsoever, which they have from the gift, grant, and foundation, confirmation or ratification of any of our ancestors, or of any other person whomsoever, and especially in that old close called [English: "le Nunclose"],
And furthermore, we do give and grant, as much as in us lies, the aforesaid priory and the other premises, with the appurtenances, to the same prioress and nuns, and to their successors,
Having to them, and to their aforesaid successors, forever, with their rights and appurtenances whatsoever, according to the first foundation ["primarium fundationem"] of the same, not wishing that the same prioress and nuns, or their aforesaid successors, should be interfered with, vexed with claims, disturbed, annoyed, alarmed or troubled or oppressed in any manner in the future,

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Bath and Wells would be Robert Stillington (pr. s. 1460) bp of Bath and Wells 1465-91 dism. Oct 1470. resumed office on restoration of Edw IV in April 1471, dism. 4 Mar 1473, *Handbook of British Chronology, 3rd ed.* BHS.

concerning their aforesaid possessions, house or priory, or other premises, with the appurtenances, by us or by our heirs, our justiciars, escheators, sheriffs, or other bailiffs or ministers whomsoever, notwithstanding any statute, act or ordinance made to the contrary,
Without any fine or fee to be taken, made or paid to us for our aforesaid Letter, or for any other cause concerning the premises in any way whatsoever,
In witness of which etc. by the king at Westminster, on 9th April [*=1473*].
[*Monasticon,* iii 271-2, Latin. Translation by Peter Franklin (PF); also in Hutchinson, Latin, ii, 185/190. *CPR 13 Edw IV* 392, the entry here is very brief.]

35. 1480
June 20. *Inspeximus* and confirmation to Isabel, the prioress and the nuns of the monastery (Armathwaite) of black nuns of the order of St Benedict by the water called Croglin, co. Cumberland, of letters patent date 6 January, 2 William II.
William, by the grace of God king of the English and duke of the Normans, to all his men faithful in Christ who shall see these present letters greetings,
Know that we, from pure motives and for the sake of charity, have founded, established and forever ordained in pure and perpetual alms, one house and monastery of the black nuns of the order of St Benedict, to the honour of Jesus Christ and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, for the souls of our ancesters and of all Christians, just as it is situated next to [or *near to*] the water called Croglyn in the County of Cumberland,
Also that we have given and granted to the nuns at the same place, the two acres of land upon which the aforesaid house and monastery are situated,
And also, that we have given and granted to the same nuns, three ploughlands [carucatas] and 10 acres of meadow, with all kinds of common rights, woods and wastes pertaining to the same three ploughlands [carucates] in any way whatsoever, lying next [or *near to*] to the aforesaid monastery,
Also, we have given and granted to the same nuns, and to their successors, forever, 216 acres of land being within our Forest on Ingilwode, lying on the north side of a certain water called Tarnwadelyn with all the woods, profits and commodies being upon the same or ever arising afterwards,
Also, we have granted to the same nuns, common pasture with all their animals, for them and for their tenants at the same place, throughout our Forest of Ingilewood and enough timber for all their buildings at the same place, whenever and as often as it shall be needed, to be taken by the delivery of our foresters, or of one of them, being in the same place,
And also, we have granted and confirmed to the same nuns, and to their successors, a certain yearly rent of 40s to be received annually, for ever, from our tenements in our town [villa] of Karlile to be paid to the same nuns and to their successors by the hand of the keeper of our aforesaid town of Karlile at the Feats of Pentecost and St Martin in Winter in equal parts,
And also, we have granted for ourselves and for our heirs that the aforesaid nuns, their tenants and servants, should be free from paying toll throughout the whole of our realm of England for any animals or property of any kind whatsoever to be bought by them, or by any of their tenants or servants, hereafter,
And also, we have granted and confirmed that the aforesaid monastery and house, with all the aforesaid three ploughlands, two acres of land and 10 acres of meadow, shuld be free in all things and have all its liberties in like manner as is granted to our Monastery of Westmynster without any annoyance, trouble or disturbance or injury from any of our sheriffs, escheators or bailiffs or from any of our ministers or lieges whomsoever,
And also we have granted to the same nuns common of pasture with their animals within the vill and commune of Aynstaplyth with free ingress and egress,
And also, we have granted that the aforesaid nuns should have liberties throughout their whole land as regards whomsoever their tenants and they should have free warren, both as regards the

jurisdiction of our law-courts and also in their waters, woods, lands, plains or boundaries, belonging or pertaining to the same monastery in any way whatsoever,
Having, holding and occupying all and singular the afore-recited things to the aforesaid nuns and to their successors, forever, of us and of our heirs, in pure and perpetucal alms, voluntarily, so, by our free will and grants [English "As hert may it think or ygh may see it"; speech marks in the original,]
In witness of which thing, we have cause these Letters to be made patent
Witnessed by myself at Westminster, on the 6th day of January in the 2nd day of our reign.
[*Monastion Anglicanum* (1846) *vol iii,* 271, Latin. Translation by PF]
In *Monasticon,* (Dugdale, Abridged, Licensed, R.Midgley, 15 May 1692 p33.) the founder is described as William the Conqueror. The editors of the *CPR* (*CPR 20 Edw IV,* 208) describe the charter as a 'forgery' and do not print it but it must be extant in the Patent Rolls; they ascribe it to William II. Freeman also ascribes it to William II (1882, ii, 506) and dismisses the charter as 'spurious'. Wilson (*VCH ii*) picks up from Freeman and discusses the charter's faults.

36. 1535 Valuation of the Monasteries

Vicaria de Aynstable

	£ s d
Ricus Chydren clericus vicarius ejuidem Ecclie de Aynniftable habet manfionem et Glebam que valet coibus annis	0 10 0
Idem Ricus habet uuu. Tenement. Ejufdem Glebe in tenur. Willmi Verte q. val p. ann.	0 6 0
Idem Ricus habet Decim feni. lini et canobi. dict. p'rochie que vale't coibus annis	6 13 0
Idem Ricus habet Decim agn. et lan. dict p'rochie que valent coibs annis	3 6 9
Idem Ricus habet decim vitul alb decim et Oblacon major et minor ac p'ficuis libri pafchalis lis cu decim uni molendini aquatic vale't coibs ais	3 15 1
Sum total valor 8*l* 11*s* de quibus	
Refolu fenag et el: In Refolue Epo Karlij p fenagio annuatim	0 2 0

	£ s d
Et in conf refolu dict dno Epo five pencon vifitacon ejufdem de tribs in tres annos 2s 6d et annuatim	0 0 10
Sum deduct 2s 10d	
Et Rem 8*l* 8*s* 2d xma inde 16*s* 9*d*	

Domns conventual monial de Armethwaite

Agnes Derwentwater prioriffe domus cov'entualis

Monialiu de Armethwaite infra com Cumbr Patrona Eccie p'orhial de Aynftable habet Rectoria' de Ayniftable que valt in decim Gran ejufd p'rochie	6 0 0
Idem Agnes habet mansionem five Glebe de Armethwaite pr dict in manib fuis p'p'is que valent p annu coib annie	2 6 8
Idem Agnes habet unu ten dict Glebe in tenuro Rici Thomfon que valet p annu coibus annis	0 6 8
Idem Agnes habet diverfas Terr et Ten, jacent in diverfis villis et Hamlet propriis com Cumbr que valent p annu coibus annis	10 8 10
Sm total valor 19*l* 2*s* 2*d* de quibus	
In refolue reddit priori de Wedderalle exiftent cella Abbathie bte Marie Virginis de Yorke an'tim	0 12 0
Et in refolue p'cucon Vifitacon Epi Karlij de triennio in trieniu 7s 6d. Et fic annuatim allocand	0 2 6
Sm deduct 3*s* 6*d*	
Et Rem 18*l* 16*s*8*d*	

Unde p flipend uni Capell celebrnt quotidie coram monal infra pr'orat 106*s* 8*d.*
Et rem 13*s* xma inde 26*s*
[From the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* as printed in Hutchinson, vol 1 pp197-8. Hutchinson converted the Roman numerals. The entry in the *Valor* is vol 5, pp 291-2. There is no record of the appropriation of the church to the priory nor of any presentation in the surviving bishops' registers.]

37. 1536
Feb 1536. Visitation of the Monasteries. Compendum compertorum per Doctorem Layton et Doctorem Legh, visitatione regia in provincea Eboraoensi ac episcoptu Coven. et Lichfelden.
Armathwayte Monialum. Founder, the king, rent, 14*l.*
[*LP Henry VIII*, vol 10, Jan-June 1536 (1887) no. 364.]

38. **1536**
June 30. List of Monasteries of a yearly value of under 200*l*, with yearly value of each.
Carlisle - St Mary Magdalene, Lanercost; Armethua. 96*l*. 10*s*. 7*d*
[*LP Henry VIII*, vol 10, Jan-June 1536 (1887) 1238.]

39. 1537 *Monasticon*, Dugdale *v* 272-3
31 July. (*Paper Surveys*, temp. Hen. VIII, Augmentation Office.)
Armethwaite
Prioratus ordinis Sci Benedicti. The Survey then takyn the penult. Day of July in the xxixth yere of the regn of oure sofrane lord Kyng Henry th'eight.
See Appendix A, Extract from *Monasticon*, Dugdale.

40. 1539
Leases
20 July Leonard Barowe, of Armathwaite, Cumb. Armathwaite priory, with the rectory of Anestapleth.
['Books of the Court of Augmentations', *LP* Hen VIII, Vol 14 Pt 1: January-July 1539 67b (1894).]

41. 1549
22 December.
Edward VI sold to John Peryent, knight, and Thomas Rewe, gentleman, the rectory and patronage of the vicarage with the glebe lands and tithes of corn, hay, wool, lamb and all other tithes belonging to the priory of Armathwaite.
[*CalPR Edw VI 1548-9*, 8-9.]

42. 1549
24 December
Peryent and Rewe sold the patronage, glebe and tithes back to Leonard Barrow.
[*CalPR Edw VI 1548-9*]
43. 1552
March. Grant to William Greyme/Grayme (Graham) for services against Scotland, the house and lands of Armathwaite priory.
[*CalPR 6 Edw* 383-4]
The patronage and great tithes remained with Barrow. See Appendix B for full grant.

44. **1555/6**
Pensions, County of Cumberland.

Armethawite Monister. Penc.	Anne Derwentwater nup. Prioress	liij*s* iiij*d*
	Galfrorde Chambres p. ann	xxj*s* viij*d*
	Anntes Margarete Standley p. ann	x*s*

[Wilson, J 'The Tudor Disestablishment in 2/3 Philip and Mary' *CW1* Xiii 364-388.]

45. 1591 – 2023

William Graham passed Nunnery (as it had become known) to his second son Fergus Graham who died before June 1591 and it then went to Fergus's eldest son known as William Graham the Elder. He died in 1603 leaving Nunnery to his grandson William Graham the Younger who died in 1615.[13] In April 1621 a licence of alienation relating to Nunnery and its manor and estate was granted to Thomas and George Graham for 66s 8d.[14] In 1690 George Graham, described 'as of Smardale', sold Nunnery to Sir John Lowther and he in 1694, conveyed it to John Aglionby in exchange for Drumburgh castle.[15] Subsequent members of the Aglionby family added to the Nunnery estate until Arthur Aglionby in 1919 sold it to the Hon Richard Denman. Nunnery is now limited to the house and manor of Ermathwaite and 52 acres of surrounding land including the well known 'Nunnery Walks,' remained with the Denmans until sold without the manor, by the Hon Harold Denman and Lady Francis Denman in September 2001 to David Hodgkiss.[16] David Hodgkiss died in March 2020 and Nunnery was put on the market in August 2022 and sold in early 2023.

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APPENDIX A EXTRACT FROM *MONASTICON*, 272-273.

LANDS OF THE PRIORY.

NUM 1V

(Paper Surveys, temp Hen VIII Augmentation Office)

Lands in Ainstable

Prioratus ordinis Sci Benedicti. The Survey then taken the penult. day of July in the xxix year of the reign of most supreme lord Henry the eight.

The demenes. The site of the said priory with one little orchard, iij, gardens, and a little close called the Lyne Close, containing in all ij acr, by year ……..ijs

Item. j close of iiij acre land arable called the Pesse banke, and is worth by year ……...iiijs

Item. j close called the Toddholes, containing xviij acres of land, arable iiij acr, meadow x acr, waste iiij acr, worth by year……..xijs

Item. iij closes of arable land called White Close cont. xx acres and is worth by year…...xxs

Item. J close called Holme Casmok, containing j acre……...xijs

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13 C/DAY1/293. Abstract of IPM of William Graham the Younger, 20 September 13 James I, 1615, reciting IPM of William Graham the Elder. 19 January 45 Elizabeth I (1602-3). 'Pedigree of Graham of Nunnery – A' in T H B Graham, 'Nunnery', *CW2* 1917

14 C/DAY/1/308.

15 Summerson, 101.

16 When in the ownership of the Denmans the house was let to various tenants. The manor of Ermathwaite or Armathwaite, consisted of the lands of the priory and included Nun Close.

Item. J close called Kirkeholme, containing j acre arable ……...xijs

Item. J close called Highfield containing v acres, whereof is builded a house and barn, in the occupancy of Ric(hard) Thomson, and rents yearly……...vjs viijd

Item. Close there containing xliiij acres of grounds wood and waste, and is worth by year……...xiiijs iiijd

Item. Close called Bradmedow, containing ix acres, in the holding of Sir Christopher Dacre, Knight, Sm …….ixs

Smr lxixs

The Nonneclose[17]

George Chirden holdeth a messuage, Richard Garthe, John Chirder, Robert Dobson, Richard Morehouse, William Verte, ij tenements, Mary Dawson, Bland Hashok, John Walby, Laurence Lamb, Ric. Wilkinson, William Miles, Thomas Falder, William Mathewson, John Aldcorne, Rowland Banys, William Baynys, everyone of them hold a tenement there at vs rent by year in all ccxvj acres land……. iiij^{li} xs

Sm pz

Dalle (Dale)

Peter Hewitson and Christopher Hewitson hold a tenement, ij fierhouses, ij lathes, j crofte containing j acre, in the field vij acr arable and ij meadow. P annum….ij hens, j cock, and in harvest j arratr. et j h'ccat.[18]

Henry Verte holdith a tentement, and J Jonet Vert, with ij fire houses, ij barnes, j croft, containing di acres vj acres of arable land and ij acres meadow, p annum…. ixs &c ut ante (*as before*).

Mathew Vertye holdith a tenement, with a croft containing di acres, vij acres of arable land, and iij acres of meadow and rents by year…….xjs, vjd. j. arratr. et j. h'ciat.

Hewgh (Hugh) Vertye holdith a tenement with a croft containing j rode, jv acres of arable land, j. acres di. of meadow and rents by year at M'tinmas and Penticost equally……...viijs ij gallin. j dies in h'ciatur. et j dies in authupn.[19]

Rowekecrofte (Ruckcroft)

Robert Hewetson the elder holdith iij acres of arable land and ij acres of meadow, with a house there, and rents by year…….iijs ij gallin. j. gall.j dies in authn. et j dies in h'aciet'

Adam Hewetson holdith a tenement with a croft j acre di. land arable and j acre of meadow in the fields there, and rents by year…….. iijs & ut ante[20]

Robert Hewetson the younger holds a tenement there, with a croft containing di. acres of land arable, j acre di. meadow in the field. P ann…….vis iiijd & ut antea

William Hewetson holdith a house with a house with a croft containing j acre di. acre iiij acre of land arable, j acre di. meadow in the field. P ann…...…vs & ut sup^{a}

John Camok holdith a tenement there, with j croft containing j acre land, ij acre of arable land in the field …….iiijs & ut sup^{a}

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17 Nunclose consisting of 216 acres is in Hesket parish 1mile ENE of High Hesket.

18 These must abbreviations for services, but what services?

19 'Gallin.' a hen in rent (*Latham*). 'dies' is days and 'authupn' surely is autumn; what is 'h'aciet'?

20 Note that four persons hold arable land in the field(s) in Ruckcroft suggesting there was a common field.

Peter Hewetson and Christopher Hewetson hold di. acre land arable in the fields, and paith by year, at the terms of Mtynmes and Pentecoste equally……. xijs

Anestaplith (Ainstable)

Antony Robson holdith a tenement with a croft, ij acre of land arable in the fields, and di. acres of meadow, and rents by year……..ijs iiijd[21]
Thomas Hoggerd and Christopher Thompson hold ij tenements with ij crofts containing vij acre of land arable, and rents by year either of them iiijs vjd…….ixs ij. gallin, j dies arrat. et j h'ciat. vel xiijd
Richard Simpson holdith a tenement with a lathe and a croft containing di. acre. per annum …...ijs vjd &c ut ante[22]
The wife of Robert Wilson holdith a tenement with a croft containing di. acre of land arable ……. ijs iiijd
Anthony Hogson holdith a tofte with a croft containing di. acre, j rod in the field of arable, and rents by the year ……..xviiijd
Robert Gray holdith a tenement, with a croft containing iij acre of arable land, and rents by year …… iiijs ij gallin. j arratr. et h'ciatur in authunpno
Christopher Thompson holdith a house and croft containing j rode land, and ij acre di. arable land and rents by year…….. iiijs

Sm xxvs viiid

Free Rent in Anestaplith

John Leche a freehold in Anestaplith paith ……..….vjd
John Grey for free rent there ……vjd
John Person for free rent there ……..iijs iiijd
William Lowthian for his free rent there ……..vjd

****

Lands Outside Ainstable

The Pishing of Kirkoswold

Agnes Rikerdby holdith a little close containing j acres land arable, called the Holme, p ann…….. ijd
Edward Franche holdith, an acre di. of land in Charbokelhersekewe and rents by year …….. iij bez. hav. mell vel ijs

Cumwhitton[23]

John Bowman, holdith a tenement with a close containing iij acres and rentith by year …… ijs vid

[21] Two hold land in the 'fields' in Ainstable
[22] What is a 'lathe'?
[23] There is a farm Nunfield at NY 506 512, first recorded 1603, *PN Cumberland.* Nunfield Cottage at NY 503 518, is labelled 'School' on 6inch 1st edition.

Thomas Skiverey holdith atenement containing iij acres of arable land and rents by year …… ijs vid

Blenkerne

Thomas Johnson holdith a tenement with v acre of land and rents by the year…. vs

The Pishe of Kirkland

The wife of John Hudson holdith a tenement with vj acres of land, and vj acres of meadow dry and ill lees, and rents by the year ……..vjs viijd

Glassonby

Edward Herryson holdith a tenement with a croft containing di. acre and ij acres arable land, and rents by year ……. ijs

Crofton

Robert Jeffreyson holdith a tenement with a garth containing j acre and xvj acres of land arable in the fields, and rents by year ……

Carlisle

Also a rent going out of the lands of Our Sovereign Lord the King, in Carlisle, in be paid by the hands of the keeper of the towns of Carlisle, by the year xls by concession William Regis Conqueror et mode ……. nl

Item parsonage of Ansispilth, with all manner of tithes and oblations there onto belonging, with the tithes of the demanes of the said monastery, renuing with in the same by year …...vj^{li}

Sm tot xxli ijs iiijd. De quiz in reddu resoluta prori de Wetherall exeunt. de terr dnie ipm annum xijd. Et bishop of Carlisle pension out of the church of Ainstable p annum ijs vid

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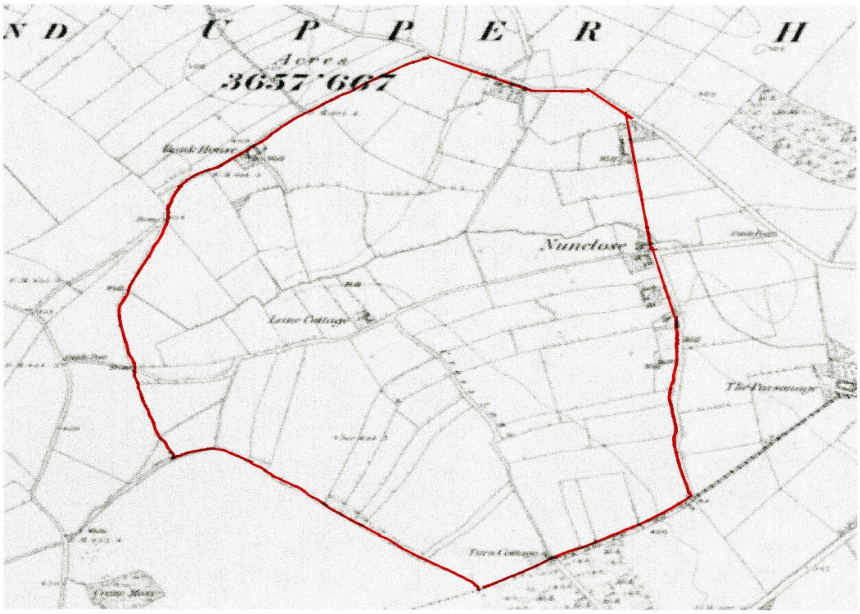

Map of Nunclose. 1st ed. 6 inch (NLS)

APPENDIX B GRANT BY EDWARD VI TO WILLIAM GREYME OF LANDS OF THE LATE PRIORY OF ARMATHWAITE

(Calendar of Patent Rolls, 6 Edward VI, 9 March 1552, 383/4)

1552, 9 March. Grant to William Greyme *alias* Carlile, house, site and lands of late priory of Armathwaite.

Grant to William Greyme *alias* Carlisle. Gentleman, for services in the North against (*versus*) Scotland of the house and site of the late priory of Armathwayte, Cumb., with the buildings, yards, orchards and gardens therein, and also a yard, three gardens, a little close called le Lynclose (2 ac.), a close of of arable land called le Pece Bank (4 ac.), a close of land, meadow and waste called le Stoddholes (4 ac. arable, 10 ac. meadow, 4 ac. waste), three closes of arable land called Whete Closes (20 ac.), a close called Holme Camok (1 ac.), another of arable land called Kyrkholme (1 ac.), and a close of land called Hygheyfeld (5 ac.) with house and barn therein, in the tenure of Richard Thomson of Armathwayte, Cumb., the close (18 ac.) of land, wood and waste and another called Brode Medowe (9 ac.) in tenure of Christopher Dacres, knight, in Armathwayte; the messuages and land (216 ac.) in the several tenures of George Chirden, Richard Garth, John Charden, Robert Dobson, Richard Morehouse, William Verte, Ralph Dawson, Claude Hashake, John Walbye, Laurence Lambe, Richard Wilkynson, William Myles, Thomas Falder, William Mathewson, John Aldcorn, Roland Banes and William Baynes, in le Nonneclose, Cumb,; the tenement. The two “fyrehouses” two “lez lathes”, a croft of pasture (1 ac.), 7 ac. arable land 1 ac. Meadow in tenure of Peter Huetson and Chritopher Huetson in Dale, Cumb. The tenement, the two ”fyrehouses”, two “lez lathes”, a croft of pasture (½ ac.). 6 ac. arable, and 2 ac. meadow in tenure of Henry Bett and Joan Verte in Dale; also the tenement, croft of pasture (½ ac.), 7 ac. arable land and 3 ac. meadow in the tenure of Matthew Verte, in Dale; the house and 3 ac. arable land, and 2 ac.

meadow in tenure of Robert Huettson, the elder, in Rewkroft, Cumb., the messuage, croft of pasture, 1½ ac. arable land and 1 ac. meadow in tenure of Adam Hewetson in Rewkroft; the messuage, croft of pasture (½ ac.), 4 ac. arable land and 1½ ac. pasture in tenure of William Heweton in Rewkecroft, another messuage, croft of pasture, 2 ac. -(*words omitted*) 1ac, arable land in tenure of John Cannoke in Rewkecrofte, and ½ ac. in tenure of Peter Hewetson and Christopher Hewetson in the fields of Rewkecroft; another tenement, croft of pasture 2 ac. land, and ½ ac. of meadow in the tenure of Anthony Robson in Anastapleth, Cumb., two tenements, and two crofts of arable land (7 ac.) in tenure of Thomas Hoggerd and Christopher Thomson, a tenement, a "lathe" and a croft of land (½ ac.) and 2 ac. arable in tenure of the wife of Robert Wilson, toft and croft of land (½ ac.) and 1 ro. arable land in tenure of Anthony Hogson, another tenement and a croft of land (3 ac.) in tenure of Robert Greye, a house, croft of land (1 ro,) and 3½ ac. arable land in tenure of Christopher Thomson, the rent of 6d. and service from lands of John Leche, the free rent of 6d. and service from lands of John Grene, another rent of 3s 4d. and service from lands of John Pieron, and the rent of 6d. And service from lands of William Lowthyan, all in Anastapleth; also the little close of arable land called le Holme (1 ac.) in tenure of Agnes Rykerby in the parish of Kyrkecswold (*sic*), cum., and also 1½ ac. arable land in tenure of Edward Franke in Charlekelhersekewe in the said parish of Kyrkeswold; a tenement and close of land (3 ac.) in tenure of John Bowerman in Cumwhitton, Cumb., and another tenement and 3 ac. arable land there in tenure of Thomas Skiverey; another tenement and 5 ac, land in tenure of Thomas Jonson in Blenkern, Cumb.; another tenement, 6 ac. land and 6 ac. meadow in tenure of the wife of John Hodson in the parish of Kyrklond, Cumb.; another tenement, a croft of land (½ ac.) and 2 ac, arable land in tenure of Edward Harrison in Glassenbye, Cumb.; and another tenement, a "garthe" (1 ac.) and 16 ac. arable land in tenure of Robert Jeffreyson in Croston (Croxton), Cumb.; all which premises belonged to the said priory, and by indenture in the Augmentations, dated 20 July 30 Henry VIII *inter alia* were leased to Leonard Barrow for 21 years.

Except and reserved all bells and lead.

Yearly value 14*l* 2*s* 4*d.*

To hold to the said William Greyme, his heirs and assigns, of the king in chief, by the service of the fortieth part of one knight's fee; rendering yearly 15*s* 8*d* at the Augmentations.

Issues since Michaelmas last.

This without fine or fee. [II 945. Westm. 9 March. *Delivered* 16 March.]

[II. 945. Westm

[*CalPR Edw VI Pt VII (1552)* 383-4.]

Spelling retained as in the *PR.* The details of the properties are as in Appendix A extracted from *Monasticon* where some names have been modernised to the form in use in the year of publication in 1844. It is not known as to what happened to the lead and the bells.

Historical Note.

It has been difficult to establish as to who was William Greyme (*alias* Carlisle). T H B Graham says he was son of 'Lang Will' of Eskdale but gives no further ancestry while he does give a detailed pedigree for his descendants.[24]

It is probable that William Greyme is the Will Grame called 'Carlill' in Thomas Musgrave's list of Border Riders.[25]

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[24] T H B Graham, 'Nunnery', *CW2,* 17, 5-7. *Note,* Graham suggests that William Graham married Jane Barrow a daughter of Leonard Barrowe who had leased the priory (No.40).

[25] J Bain, *Calendar of Letters and Papers Relating to the Affairs of the Borders of England and Scotland,* vol 1, 1560-1594. p 125. T H B Graham translate as (Carlisle)

'This Will Grame had issue Arthur Grame of 'Carlill' who is Scottish and dwelleth near the Red kyrke in Scotland.[26] *Forge (Fergus) called Forge of the Nunnery, his brother, dwelleth on the grounds King Henry gave his father.'*

Given that Thomas Musgrave was giving the names and relationships of the Grahams of the West March, of whom there were many, from memory the error as to which king gave William Greyme the nunnery is understandable. William Greyme's grant (No. 45) was a reward for '*for services towards Scotland'* so it is reasonable to suggest that the Fergus Graham put in command by Lord Wharton, Warden of the West March, of Castle Milk in Dumfries and Galloway after its capture on 10 September 1547 was the son of William Greyme. Lord Wharton led an army into southwest Scotland as a diversion to the main invasion led by the Duke of Somerset up the east coast.[27] Castlemilk stands 2½ miles SSE of Lockerbie, NY 149776; the tower was demolished in 1707 and the site is now part of the Castle Milk and Corrie Estate.

APPENDIX C NUNCLOSE

ENTRIES IN THE *CALENDARS OF PATENT ROLLS* and *FINE ROLLS*, Richard II – Henry VII[28]

***ROTULORIUM ORIGINALIUM,* vol. II, 193.**

Referenced as footnote in the account of Armathwaite Priory by James Wilson, ed, vol, 2 *VCH Cumberland,*

Edw III, 1327-1377,
p193
1348, No date.
Commitment to Thomas le Eawer and Robert de Meurose of a close near to Ternwatheland called Nouneclose in Forest of Inglewode….
{Wilson noted: 'It is very odd that in 1348 Edward III. should have granted to Thomas le Eawer and Robert de Meurose for their good service a certain close near Ternwatheland called 'la Nouneclose' within the king's forest of Inglewode (*Rot. Orig*. [Rec. Com.], ii. 193). From the name of the place it must have had some previous connection with the nunnery.'}

CALENDAR OF PATENT ROLLS

Richard II vol 1 1377-1381.
p457
1380, April 7
Appointment for, life, from Easter next, by the advice of the Council of the king's esquire Roger de Coghull, keeper of the forest of Ingelwode, to the custody of the laund of Morton and Mortonscogh rendering yearly there for 22*l*.; of a close called 'Les Wollaykes' 30*l*.; of the closes called 'Ivontonfeld and Barrokfeld ' with 'Le Broungill' rendering yearly therefor 13*l*.6s.8d.; of the closes of Hesket and Nuncios rendering yearly therefor 18*l*. 13*s*. 4*d*.; and of the close of Thougthaayth in the said forest, rendering yearly therefor 100s.; being total yearly farm of 60*l* 10*s*.

[26] SW of Gretna in Scotlsnd.
[27] Gervase Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513-1550,* 184. For Castlemilk see Alastair M T Maxwell-Irving, *The Border Towers of Scotland: The West March,* 17 Castlemilk, 96.
[28] See T H B Graham 'Hesket-in-the Forest; *CW2, vol. 23,* 1923, for discussion on the closes or assarts.

p461
1380, April 12
Grant for life to Roger Coghull of 20*l* yearly from his farm rent of 60*l* 10*s* (formerly only 35*l* 9*s*) for the custody of the laund of Morton and Mortonscogh and the closes of Wallaykes, Ivetonfeld, Barrackfeld with Browngill, Hesket, Nunclos and Thougthwaith in Inglewode forest. ps.

Vacated by surrender and cancelled because the king granted to him 20l yearly, for life, from the issues of the county of Chester, 13 May, 13 Richard II.

Richard II, vol 4 1389-1392.
p249-50
1390, May 13
Grant, for life or until further order, as from Easter last, to Roger Coghulle, esquire of the king, of 20£ a year from the issue of the county of Chester, on his surrender of letters patent dated 12 April, 3 Richard II, granting to him that sum from the farm of the laund of Morton and Mortonscogh, the close of Wollaykes, Ivenfeld and Barrockfeld with "le Browngill', the closes of Hesket, Nunclose and Thoughtwaith in the forest of Inglewood, granted to him at 60£ 10*s* a year. By ps.[*Cal PR 3 Richard II* 457-61.]

Richard II vol 5 1391-1396.
p376
1394, Jan. 23.
Grant, for life, to Edward, earl of Roteland,[29] of the reversion of the closes (*clausuras*) of Mortonclose, Haskethes, le Nonneclose, le Wulakes and Blakeritweyt.,Cumberland, recently granted for a term of years to lord Nevyll, at the same yearly rent., viz . 15*l*. By p..s.

*Vacated by surrender and cancelled, because the king granted the said earl for life, after the, said term, the, closes (*clausa*) of Morton, Wollakyes, Hesket, le Nunclose, and Blakerthwayte, 26 February in the twentieth year.*

Richard II Vol 6, 1396-99.
p88
1397, Feb 26
Grant for life, to Edward, earl of Rutland, of the reversion of the closes Morton, Wollaytes, Hesket, le Nunclos and Blaberthwayt, recently granted for a term of years to lord de Nevyll, and at the same yearly rent viz. 15£; on his surrender of letters patent dated 23 January, in the seventeenth year [*Cal PR 1391-6, p*376] found invalid on account of misdescription. Ps.

Henry IV, vol II, 1401-1405.
p386
1404, May1.
Whereas lately by letters patent at the supplication of the king's esquire Thomas de Stirkeland,[30] the king granted to him three closes within the forest of Ingelwode called Morton, Barrok [and] Heskett, to hold for life, rendering yearly at the Exchequer as much as other farmers of the same, and he expected by virtue of the said letters to have at farm all closes within the forest which Ralph, lord of Nevile, had at farm rendering 15*1* yearly and after him Edward, earl of Rutland, had for the same farm, viz. the said closes of Morton [and] Hesket with the closes called Wollaykes alias Wulakes, Nunclose and Blakerytweyat alias Blabertweyt , all which closes contained in the said

[29] Edward 'of York' or 'of Norwich (see Aumale-*Dukedom,* see Cambridge, Cork, Rutland, York: b. c. 1373; cr. 25 Feb.1390; d.s.p. 25 Oct. 1415. *HBC.* 3rd ed.
[30] SC 8/186/9268.

letters except the close of Barrok are called and entered in record in the Exchequer by other names, viz. the closes of Morton and others in one roll 'les laundes of Morton ' and in another roll 'Morton' simply, and the closes of Hesket in one roll the closes of Haskethes and in another roll the closes of Hesketh, and the close of Barrok is in the possession of Mary de Stapelton and William her son for life, and the closes called Wollaykes alias Wulake Nunclose and Blakerytweyt alias Blabertweywt were omitted from the letters, and he has surrendered the said letters; the king grants to him for life all the said closes except the close called Barrok with all herbages and other profits and commodities, rendering at the Exchequer 15*l* yearly. By K.
Vacated by surrender and canceled, because on 24 February in the eighth year[31] *the king granted the same to him and John de Skelton 'chivaler' for life*.

Henry VI, vol 4, 1441-1446,
p191
1443, July3.
Appointment of Richardhard Neville earl of Salisbury and the heirs male of his body as justices of the forests beyond Trent and justices itinerant and wardens thereof with full powers ; and grant to them of 100s. yearly from the prior and convent of St. Mary, Carlisle, 106s. 8d. yearly by the hands of Richardhard de Kirkbride the lawn of Plompton[32] co,. Cumberland, to the value of 221. yearly, with power to inclose the same, 100s. yearly during the life of Roger, son of Thomas de Bethome and Mary his wife, late the wife of William Stapilton, from the 81. 6s. 8d paid by them to the king for parcel of the demesne lands and pastures by Carlisle and for the closes of Itonfeld and Barrokfeld with Brumgill within the forest of Inglewod which Roger and Mary hold of the king's grant for life, and after their death the remainder thereof to the value of 100s. yearly, 15£.6s. 8d. paid yearly by John Skelton esquire, son of John Skelton, 'chivaler,' for life for certain closes called Morton, Hesketz, Wollaykes alias Wellaykes, Nunclos and Blaberithwayte Co Cumberland which he holds of the king's grant for life, and the remainder thereof after John's death to the said value, in part satisfaction of 100marks yearly to be paid to the earl and his heirs for his fees; grant further to the same of 14£ yearly from all the issues of the said forests; to hold the premises rendering 1d. a year; provided that they render at the Exchequer a faithful account of all issues not herein expressed; grant also to them of reasonable wood and underwood within the forest of Inglewode for the enclosure of the lawn of Plompton, and that they shall appoint at will all foresters and officers in the forest of Inylewode. [See also calendars 1422-1429, p411, 412; 1429-1436 p96].

Henry VI, vol 5, 1446-1452.
p566
1452, Feb. 14.
Ratification of letters patent dated 3 July, 21 HenryVI, in favour of Richardhard Neville earl of Salisbury [*Calendar, 1441-1446* p191] and grant to him intail male of 100*s*. yearly by the hands of the prior and convent of St. Mary, Carlisle, from the farm of 55 acres of land in the lawn of Elreton; of 100*s*.[rectius 106*s*.] 3*d*. yearly by the hands of Richardhard Kirkebryde, which he and his heirs are bound to render for the farm of the lawn of Brathwayte with the covert of Midelscogh; of the lawn of Plumpton, co. Cumberland, enclosed of late by the earl at great costs, worth before the enclosure 22£ a year, to hold to that value ; of 100*s*. of the 30£. 19*s*. 1*d*. and the 10 marks, which Henry Percy, knight, lord of Ponynges, is bound to render yearly for the farm of all the burgages, tenements, mills, lands, rents and farms, inhabited and waste, within Berwick upon Tweed and of a parcel of land called 'Mawedelyn feld ' and the toll called ' halpenytoll ' and the customs of ships, to wit, segeage, mesurage, bollage and customs of other merchandise of ships entering there and stallage of market and customs of barrels of salmon there, of the keeping of a parcel of the king's

[31] 1407.
[32] Plumpton Hay or Park, an enclosure for deer in Inglewood Forest.

demesne land and pasture by Carlisle and of the closes of Itonfeld and Barrokfeld with Brumegill within Inglewod forest, co. Cumberland, of the keeping of two parts of the lordships or manors of Kneton and Mideltonco,. York, and of the keeping of a messuage called ' le Quene Warderobe ' in London by AldRichardhgate in the parish of St. Anne, with 12 tenements adjacent thereto, which keeping by letters patent dated 23 July, 29 Henry VI, the king committed to the said Henry from Easter then last for twenty- four years at a rent of 30*l* 19*s*. 1*d*. and 10 marks of increment, the said earl to have the said 100*s*. from Michaelmas 29, HenryV; of the said closes of Itonfeld and Barrokfeld with Brumegill extended at 100*s*.yearly, to hold to that value; of the closes called Morton, Hesket, Wzollaykes, Nuncios and Blaberythwayte within the said forest, to hold to their value of 15£.6*s*. 8*d*. a year; and of 14£. yearly from other issues of the forests beyond Trent by the hands of the warden; to hold the premises from Michaelmas 29, Henry VI, in the name of his fee for the office of warden of the said forests and in satisfaction of 100 marks yearly wont to be paid to the said warden. Grant also to the same of wood and, underwood to be taken by him in Inglewod forest for enclosure and repair of the lawn of Plumpton and the said closes, and grant that he may make as many enclosures as necessary. Grant also to the earl, for his long service on the west marches towards Scotland, in tail male, of the premises specified in letters patent dated 3 April 27 HenryVI [see p281], annulled by an act in the last parliament, to hold from Michaelmas 29 Henry VI, by the service of a fiftieth part of a knight's fee, rendering yearly 9£. 8¼*d*. at the Receipt of the Exchequer during the life of Jacquetta, duchess of Bedford, wife of Richardhard Widevile lord of Ryvers and after her death 33£. 19*s*. 3½*d*. and half a farthing; with remainder to the heirs male of the bodies of Ralph, late earl of Westmorlanadnd, Joan his wife. Grant also to the said Richardhard of 20£. yearly to support the style of earl of Salisbury and of Alesia, countess of Salisbury, his wife, to hold to them and the heirs of Alesia from the issues of Wilts from Michaelmas 29, HenryVI.

Henry VII, vol I 1485-1494,
p54.
1485, Dec 12. Grant for life, from Michaelmas last to Adam Penyngton esquire, of the keeping of certain closes called Warmorton, Better Hesketh, Warrenhesketh, Wollukys, Nonneclose, Heyclose, Coltclose, and Blaburghwayte, in the forest of Inglewode co Cumberland so that he render 16l and 20d yearly at the receipt of the Echequer.

CALENDAR OF FINE ROLLS

Edward III, 1327-1377

1369
Dec 12. Commitment to John de la More of the keeping of the closes of Heskey within the forest of Inglewood, to hold for 20 years, rendering to the king 20 marks yearly at Michaelmas by the hands of the keeper of the said forest. By bill of the treasurer.

Dec 12. Commitment to the same, in like terms, of the keeping of the close called ‘Les Nunclose’ within the said forest, to hold for 20 years at a yearly rent of 24*s*. By bill of the treasurer.

1376
Nov. 14. Commitment to Thomas de Musgrave, ‘chivaler’, and William de Hoton, of the keeping of the closes of Heskey and La Nunclose within the forest of Inglwode, which John de la More, deceased, held of the king’s commitment, to hold the same for twelve years, rendering respectively for the two closes 20 marks and 26s, 8d, yearly at Michaelmas by the hands of the keeper of the forest.

By bill of William Latymer, keeper of the said forest.

Richard II, 1378-1399

1386

July 18. Commission to Richard Beaulieu to seize into the king's hand the lawn of Morton and Mortonscogh, the closes called Les Wollaykes, Ivetonfield and Barrockfeld with Le Broungill, the closes of Hesket and Le Nunclose, and the close of Thougthuayth, in the forest of Ingelwode, which Roger Coghull lately had of the kin's commitment, together with the issues and profits thereof since Michaelmas, 9 Richard II and to ordain and dispose thereof for the king's profit until further order, provided that he answer at the Exchequer for the said issue and profits; - any other letters of the king to the contrary and notwithstanding. By bill of the treasurer.

Dec 8. Commitment to Ralph lord de Nevill, - mainprise of John de Roos, lord of Hamelak, and Richard Shropshire of the county of Lincoln, - of the keeping of the lawns of Morton and Mortonscough, and the close called 'Le Wollaykes', Hesketh and Le Nunclose, co. Cumberland, to hold the same from Easter last for nine years, rendering 15*l;* . Yearly at the Exchequer by equal portions at Michaelmas and easter, and supporting all charges incumbent on the said lawns and close, By bill of the treasurer. *Vacated because surrendered and so these letters are cancelled.*

Henry VI, 1422-1471

1430

May 18. Commiment to Robert Warcop, esquire, - by mainprise of Thomas Wharf of the county of York, 'gentilman', and John Cerf of the same county, - of the keeping of the fishery of Ermethwaite, Ternwathelayn and Glassous, and of 10 acres of pasture which Richard Trotter held within the forest of Inglewode, the same being for certain causes in the king's hand; to hold the same from Easter last for 10 years, rendering 23s. 4d. for the fishery and 10s. for the pasture, as Robert de Louther, 'chivaler', the last farmer rendered, and an increment of 12d. yearly at Michaelmas and Easter equally, and supporting all other charges incumbent on the said fishery and pasture; provided always that if any other person shall be willing without fraud to give more by way of increment for the said keeping, then the said Robert Warcop is bound to pay such larger sum, if he will have the keeping. By the bill of the treasurer.

May 22. Commitment to John Rodere of the county of Cumberland, esquire, - by mainprise of Nicholas Rothery of the parish of St Celement Danes without the Bar of the New Temple, London, 'sherman', and Henry Westwra of the county of Cumberland, 'sherman,' of the keeping of certain closes called Warmorton, Betterhesketh, Waresketh, Wolleykys, Nonneclose, Heyeclose, Coltclose and Blaburghtwayt, within the forest of Inglewode, co. Cumberland; to hold from Easter last for 20 years, rendering yearly the 15*l* 6s. d. for which answer has been made to the king, maintaining enclosures and supporting all other charges; with proviso for the increase of the farm. By bill of the treasurer. Dated etc..

Edward IV, 1461-1483

1472

June 20. Commitment to Richard duke of Gloucester, constable and admiral of England - by mainprise of Morgan Kydwelle, 'gentilman' and John Shawardyn, 'gentilman', both of London, - of the keeping of (1) the subsidies and other duties due to the king from all goods and merchandise (except wools, hides and woolfells) in the town of Carlisle, (2) all sturgeon taken within the county of Cumberland (3) the pasture of oxen by Brademedowe, the pasture of Leye by Swyft, the pasture of Leyrepates, the pasture in the willows by Midelme, the pasture by Midelholme, the pasture by the fishery, the pasture of Sevesyke, Les Tetheringes in Le Brodemedowe, the pasture in the willows by Le Swyfte, and the king's fishery in the water of Edene by the bridge of Eden, co.

Cumberland, the said pastures and fishery being parcels of the demesne lands pertaining to the castle of Casrlisle (4) the sheriff;s net in the same county, *alias* the fishery called Le Frithnet, in the water of Eden, co, Cumberland, and (5) certain enclosures called Warmerton, Betterhesket, Warhesket, Wolleykys, Nonneclose, Heyclose, Coltclose and Blaburghtwayate, within the forest of Inglewode, co Cumberland; to hold from Easter last for 20 years, at a yearly farm of 46*l*. 16s. 8d. for which answer has been made to the king and an increment of 12d.; with clause touching maintenance of houses, enclosures and buildings and support of charges; and with proviso for the increase of the farm, By bill of the treasurer. Dated etc..

Henry VII, 1485-1509
1485
Nov. 30. Commitment (with like proviso) to Adam Penyngton – by mainprise of Robert Denneham, 'brewer' and John Pirry, 'grocer', both of London, - of the keeping of certain closes called Warmorton, Better Hesketh, Warre Hesketh, Wolleikis, Nonneclose, Heyclose, Colteclose and Blaboruhgtwaite, within the forest of Inglewod, co. Cumberland; to hold from Michaelmas last for 7 years, at a yearly farm of the 16*l* for which answer has been made and an increment of 20d. By bill of the treasurer, Dated etc.

PETITIONS TO THE KING[33]

Richard II
1397
Edward, Duke of York in regard for Nunclose, Blaburthwaite (TNA SC8/252/12567).

Henry IV
1414
Thomas de Stirkland for Wollaykes, Nunclose, Blaburthwaite (TNA SC8/28619268).

Henry VI
1459
Henry, earl of Northumberland for Wooloaks, Nunclose, Blaburthwait

[33] For details of TNA entries see Appendix F

APPENDIX D Musters of Leith Ward, Cumberland. [Feb. 14.] {1580-81}

"Leith Warde.—The Muster booke of Lieth warde, conteyninge all the townshippes and hambletes within the said warde, taken by Thomas Laiton esquier, Richard Kirkbryde and John Atkinson gentlemen, by virtue of lettres directed from the right honorable the Lorde Scroppe Lord Warden of the West Marches of England towards Scotland, &c."

Nunclose.—"Speares."—Cuthbert Hewetson, Jeffray Clerk, Mathewe Vertie, Thomas Wilkinson, Clement Morhouse, William Sewell, Michaell Lamley. "Without furniture."—Richard Baynes, Richard Garth, Jo. Tallentyre, Christofer Scott, Roland Baynes, Robert Chirden, Jo. Wawlby, Christofer Lamley, John Sewell. "Absent."—Rowland Vertie, William Baynes, Adam Baynes, William Pattinson, Richard Chirden, Robert Chirden, John Chirden, Jo. Alcorne, Thomas Morehouse.

[Joseph Bain (editor) 'Border Papers volume 1: February 1581', *Calendar of Border Papers: volume 1: 1560-95* (1894), pp. 35-66.] URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=45724&strquery=nunclose Date accessed: 06 January 2014.

For comparison with tenants at the dissolution of the priory in 1538: *The Records of Armathwaite Priory,* Appendix A:

The Nonneclose

George Chirden holdeth a messuage, Richard Garthe, John Chirder, Robert Dobson, Richard Morehouse, William Verte, ij tenements, Mary Dawson, Bland Hashok, John Walby, Laurence Lamb, Ric. Wilkinson, William Miles, Thomas Falder, William Mathewson, John Aldcorne, Rowland Banys, William Baynys, everyone of them hold a tenement there at vs rent by year in all ccxvj acres land……. iiij^{li} xs

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APPENDIX E HESKET-IN-THE-FOREST

from A J L Winchester (ed), *Cumbria: An Historical Gazetteer.*

Ancient parish (thought to have been chapelry in Carlisle St Mary parish until 14th century) in Leath ward, Cumberland, embracing townships of High and Low Hesket (which also included village of Armathwaite), Calthwaite, Plumpton Street, Itonfield and Petteril Crooks. CP enlarged by absorbing Plumpton Wall CP 1934.***Acreage:*** 16,733 acres [6,890 ha], including c. 4,000 acres [c. 1,600 ha] of common land enclosed under Inglewood Forest enclosure award 1819. Parish acreage divided between constituent townships thus: High and Low Hesket:3,658 acres [1,480 ha]; Calthwaite: 1,888 acres [764 ha]; Plumpton Street:2,714 acres [1,098 ha]; Itonfield: 2,980 acres [1,206 ha]; and Petteril Crooks:5,159 acres [2,088 ha]. ***Population:*** 1,545 in 1811, rising to 2,150 in 1871;then falling back to 1,822 in 1931 (last census year before boundary changes). Population of enlarged Hesket CP stood at 2,363 in 2001. ***Landownership:*** Hesket parish covered core of *royal forest of Inglewood* which, as defined 1301,comprised tract of lowland between Carlisle and Penrith, lying west of River Eden as far as Thursby, Caldbeck and Blencow. Held by Crown with Honour of Penrith from reign of Richard III until 1696, when William III granted forest and Honour to William Bentinck, duke of Portland, whose descendant, 3rd duke, sold it to his brother-in-law William Cavendish, 5th duke ofDevonshire, 1787. Inglewood forest court or 'swainmote' met at Court Thorn, Low Hesket. *Manor of Armathwaite* held by Skelton family from 14th century until 1712 when Richard Skelton sold it to William Sanderson; then descended to William Milbourne 1741; sold to earl of Lonsdale 1846, later passing to Edward Ecroyd (1833-1914). *Manor of Nunclose* (land in Hesket belonging to nunnery at Ainstable) was granted to William Graham 1552, passing to Lowthers who exchanged it for other land 1695 with Dalstons of Acornbank, who sold it 1762 to William Milbourne, thus uniting it with Armathwaite. Large sales of land in forest in years 1789-93: Calthwaite soldto Dixon family; Itonfield to Oliphants.

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APPENDIX F THREE PETITIONS TO THE KING (TNA)

Petitioners: Edward of York, Duke of Aumale. Name(s): York, Duke of Aumale, Edward. Addressees: King....

Special Collections: Ancient Petitions. PETITIONS TO THE KING; TO THE KING AND COUNCIL; TO THE COUNCIL; TO THE PARLIAMENT; AND THE LIKE. 12551-12600. Individual petitions are described , dated, and are available at item level. king will grant him several closes in Cumberland for his life after the term for which they were granted to Neville has expired paying £7 at the... profits and advantages received by them. Nature of endorsement: [On face:]This petition was granted by the king on 15 October, in the twenty-first...Petitioners: Edward of York, Duke of Aumale. Name(s): York, Duke of Aumale, Edward. Addressees: King. Nature of request: The duke requests that the

Note: The petition dates to 1397 as the response is dated to 15 October, 21 [Ric. II].

Location: Inglewood forest, [Cumberland]...Hesket in the Forest, [Cumberland]...Nunclose, [Cumberland]

Held by:	The National Archives, Kew - Special Collections: records of various departments, arranged according to type
Date:	1397
Reference:	SC 8/252/12567

Petitioners: Thomas de Stirkeland (Strikland), esquire. Name(s): de Stirkeland (Strikland), Thomas. Addressees: King. Nature of...

Special Collections: Ancient Petitions. PETITIONS TO THE KING; TO THE KING AND COUNCIL; TO THE COUNCIL; TO THE PARLIAMENT; AND THE LIKE. 9251-9300. Individual petitions are described , dated, and are available at item level. Stirkeland requests that he be granted certain closes and lands in Inglewood Forest for life, on the surrender of earlier letters patent. He states that... he expected an earlier grant of these lands to include all the lands formerly held by Lord Neville and the Earl of Rutland, but some of the lands... endorsement: [None]. Places mentioned: Inglewood Forest, [Cumberland]; Morton, [Cumberland]; Barrock, [Cumberland]; Hesket in the Forest, [Cumberland

Note: The requested grant was made on 1 May 1404.

Location: Inglewood Forest, [Cumberland]...Hesket in the Forest, [Cumberland]...Nunclose, [Cumberland]

Held by:	The National Archives, Kew - Special Collections: records of various departments, arranged according to type
Date:	1404
Reference:	SC 8/186/9268

Petitioners: Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland. Name(s): Percy, Earl of Northumberland, Henry. Addressees: King. Nature...

Special Collections: Ancient Petitions. PETITIONS TO THE KING; TO THE KING AND COUNCIL; TO THE COUNCIL; TO THE PARLIAMENT; AND THE LIKE. 6703-6750. Individual petitions are described , dated, and are available at item level. Forest, Cumberland; Wooloaks, Cumberland; Nunclose, Cumberland; Blaburthwait, Cumberland; Raskelf, North Riding of Yorkshire; Deighton, North Riding

Location: Nunclose, Cumberland

Held by:	The National Archives, Kew - Special Collections: records of various departments, arranged according to type
Date:	1459
Reference:	SC 8/135/6720

APPENDIX G Prioresses and Nuns

Prioresses (from *VCH History of Cumberland*, i, 192)

Amabel (*Mabel*)[34]
Annabel[35]
Isabel, died 1362[36]
Katherine de Lancaster, elected 1362[37]
Isabel, occurs 1480[38]
Isabel, Otteley, died 1507[39]
Agnes or Annie Elvyngton, died 1507[40]
Agnes or Anne Derwentwater, occurs 1535, 1537[41]

Nuns

Alice de Culwen?[42]
Cecily Dryng, sub-prioress[43]
Alice, dau John Warde[44]
Alice, dau William de Vaux[45]
Joan de London[46]
Agnes (pensioner)[47]
Galfrode Chambers (pensioner)[48]
Annte Margarete Standley(pensioner)[49]

Numbers in square brackets [ ] are entries in *Records*

34 CAC DAY1/5 5-8(6). [7]
35 *TNA Patent Roll* {*C66/120 m, 13d*} 28 Edw I. [12]
36 *Register of Gilbert Welton*, 144 [22]
37 *Register of Gilbert Welton*, 487 [25]
38 *CPR* 1476-85, 208
39 Dugdale, *Mon*, iii. 272-4.
40 Ibid, 270
41 Ibid, 272
42 [20]
43 [25]
44 [26]
45 [27]
46 [29]
47 [36]
48 [36]
49 [36]

BIBLIOGRAPHY – NUNNERIES AND RELIGIOUS WOMEN

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https://historyofwomenreligious.org/women-religious-bibliography/medieval/

A selection, including publications on individual nunneries, is given below.

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Extract from *Map of County of Cumberlnd* by Joseph Hodskinson and Thomas Donald, 1773. NL Scotland

THE PRIORY OF ARMATHWAITE (Benedictine Nuns)

ORIGIN, AN ESSAY

An Anglo Saxon Nunnery in Carlisle

In 685 Ecgfrid, king of Northumbria, gave St Cuthbert recently appointed bishop of the Anglian diocese of Lindisfarne, the city of Carlisle (called by the English, Luei) and the country for fifteen miles around it as a portion of the diocese. Cuthbert placed a community of nuns in the city with a sister of Ecgfrid as the abbess and also founded a school. Although there is little recorded history for the following period, Lindisfarne was raided by Vikings in 793 and the diocese continued until 854 when Eardulf was consecrated bishop of Carlisle. Whether the nunnery and school continued until the raid is not known but Northumbria was over-run by the Danes in 866, Carlisle was wasted and all institutions destroyed.[50]

Doctor Todd, the 17th century clergyman and historian suggested that when William Rufus recovered Carlisle he re-established the nunnery at Armathwaite. This has been dismissed by later historians for lack of any evidence.

Nunneries in the North after the Conquest

After 1100 seven nunneries were founded in the northern counties of Cumberland, Northumberland and Durham: Armathwaite (B) and Seaton or Lekeley (B) in Cumberland; Lambley (B), Newcastle upon Tyne (B), Holystone (AC), Guyzance (PC) (probably extinct before 1349). There is a record of nuns working in the hospital of St Leonard in Tynemouth and Neasham (B) in County Durham on the boundary with Yorkshire.[51] There were none in Westmorland. Each of the nunneries was small, relatively poor and apart from the priory of St Bartholomew at Newcastle, occupied isolated rural sites. Wilson in the *VCH* for Cumberland suggested that religious associations of women did not flourish in Cumberland as the 'rough life and continual warfare of a border county did not tend to promote institutions more adapted to settled and peaceful districts.'[52] Such an opinion could be also expressed of Northumberland and County Durham but it should be noted that there were no nunneries in more peaceful Lancashire and only one in Cheshire. At the other extremity of the kingdom there were none in Cornwall and three in Devon. On the other hand twenty-four were founded in Yorkshire between 1125 and c.1200x1215.[53]

Founders have been suggested for six of the seven nunneries while for Armathwaite a 'spurious' foundation charter approved by Edward IV in 1480 claimed it was founded by 'William, by the grace of God king of the English and duke of the Normans.'[54] In petitions the nuns claimed the king as their patron.

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50 VCH *Cumberland* ii 4-6. *Wikipedia:* Sources.

51 B – Benedictine; AC – Augustinian Canonesses; PC – Premonstratensian Canonesses. D Knowles and R Neville Hancock, *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales,* Harlow (1953, reissued 1994).

52 *Victoria History of Cumberland* II., accessible free on line at britishhistory.org.uk.

53 Janet E Burton, *The Yorkshire Nunneries in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries,* Borthwick Papers No. 56 (1979). Yorkshire experienced raids and warfare although not to the extent of the Northern Counties.

54 Letters Patent, Edward IV, ratification of the possessions of the Priory of Armathwaite, [*Monastion, vol iii,* NUM 3 271; *CPR* 13 Edw IV 392, where the 'charter' is dismissed as a forgery and not printed]. There are two translations of the charter in the Aglionby Papers, D AY 2/28 describes it as of 'William II' and D AY 6/34 as of 'William the Conqueror'. 'Forgery is something of a misnomer , as monks might see it as the modernisation or correction of documents to accurately represent that to which they believed themselves to be entitled' M T Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307,* 31 (Chichester 2013.)

Little history is known about the two Cumberland nunneries as the cartularies if they ever existed, have not survived. Only one extant charter for Armathwaite has been discovered. Both sites are in private hands and while some visible physical remains survive for Seaton only a section of possible 13th century wall has been identified within the present house called simply Nunnery on the site of Armathwaite Priory.[55]

The site of what has been known from at least 1212[56] first as Ermathwaite and then Armathwaite nunnery lies in the south-eastern corner of the parish of Ainstable on the north bank of the Croglin Water approximately 700m upstream from it's confluence with the River Eden, the site is now occupied by a house called Nunnery (Grade 1). Croglin Water marks the boundary between what were the townships of Ainstable and Staffield and post-1889 the civil parishes of Ainstable and Kirkoswald. The modern road from Kirkoswald to Armathwaite runs approximately 70 metres north-east of the site crossing Croglin Water via a stone arch bridge. Downstream of the bridge the beck enters a small but spectacular gorge with waterfalls and paths known as Nunnery Walks that lead to the River Eden.[57] Nunnery Walks were open to the public during the 1970s and 1980s when the house was leased as a hotel but closed to the public by a new owner in 2000 as they had become unsafe.[58]

After the Dissolution what medieval building survived in 1715 was incorporated into a house which was further extended in the 17th and 18th centuries to form the present building described by Robinson, as the 'best surviving early c-18 house in Cumberland.'[59] Of the priory buildings nothing survives today but internal alterations in the late 1950s revealed an arch with dog-tooth ornamentation which Bulman described as a doorway.[60] Following a planning application in 2000 for further alterations to the house and the associated farm steading, English Heritage requested historic building and archaeological surveys.[61] Bulman's doorway arch was reassessed as that of a window and a length of 13th century wall was identified alongside it. Possible structures were identified under the lawn and to the east and north east of the house. These investigations did not extend across the road where the HER records a mutilated rectangular platform some 44m by 17m which may have been the site of a medieval or post-medieval chapel and the Ordnance Survey marks a Chapel Well.[62]

Associated with the priory and beside the road to Ruckcroft some 100 metre NE of Nunnery stands a sandstone pillar with a stone inscribed with the text 'sanctuarem' in imitation Saxon letters and the date 1088 set into it, it is known as the Sanctuary Stone. The pillar is first recorded in 1755 and Hutchinson reports a local saying that the figures were added at the 'beginning of this century' (18th century, Hutchinson was published 1793-7) to record the founding of the monastery and suggests the pillar was erected by Henry Aglionby when he built the present house in 1715.[63]

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55 See Historic England Heritage Gateway; *CW3* and HER reports for Nunnery.

56 Cole.

57 'Account of the romantic scenery near Nunnery in Cumberland.' *Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 32 (1811.) Accessible on line at the HathiTrust.

58 The Walks were laid out by Christopher Aglionby (1754-1785); Henry Summerson, *'An Ancient Squires Family': The History of the Aglionbys c. 1130-2002.* Bookcase, 2007.

59 Robinson, John Martin, *A Guide to the Country Houses of the North-West*, London 1991. 130-1.

60 Bulman, C G, 'An Ancient Doorway at Nunnery, Armathwaite', *CW2* LX 51-4.

61 HER Reports 3/03/1053, 3/04/1339, B/013/2004, 3/05/1442, 3/05/1465, Kendal. Goodall, I, Wray, N, Buckley, J, Dennison, E 'Ainstable: The Nunnery, Staffield' *CW3* 2006, 242/3.

62 EH PastScape, Monument Num, 12457. Chapel Well 1867 6" OS; earliest record1794, English Place-Names Society, *Cumberland* 1 170.

63 The *Gentleman's Magazine* 1755, 440, 451-2, available at the Armitt Library, Ambleside and on-line at http://www.hathitrust.org/. Hutchinson Vol 1 192-3. Rev J Charles Cox, *The Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Seekers of*

Such records for Armathwaite that the editor of the *VCH History of Cumberlan,* The Reverend James Wilson, had access to are summarised in *VCH* where he discusses the history that can be derived from them, he does not however, discuss the history of medieval women religious or suggest as to how the nunnery came to be founded on its site.[64] James Wilson was a scholar of his time and his work on the religious houses of Cumberland reflects that at the time interest in monasticism was concentrated on male religious. Houses for women did make it into lists of religious houses and only for a tiny few were their stories published[65] and no detailed analytical study on women religious in England was published until Eileen Power.[66] Her work covered 1275-1535 after the period when most nunneries and indeed most monasteries, had come into existence.[67] Lina Eckenstein (1896) had worked on women and monasticism in Europe but her section on English nunneries houses only dealt with the pre-Conquest houses.[68] Gasquet[69] devotes one chapter to nuns and thereafter him there is a gap and even the great scholar of medieval English monasticism David Knowles, although not deliberately ignoring nuns did not give them more than the briefest of mentions.[70] Colvin devotes a chapter to the four Premonstratensian English nunneries and individual nunneries of other orders have received attention.[71] Janet Burton's monograph on the nunneries of Yorkshire in the 12th and 13th centuries was published in 1979[72] but it was Sharon Elkins with her studies of holy women in 12th century England[73] and more specifically Sally Thompson[74] with her seminal work on the founding of English nunneries after the Norman Conquest that religious women in England and Wales received the attention and research they deserve. The work of Burton, Elkins and Thompson has been followed by more scholars mainly women but with a few men as well, Roberta Gilchrist[75] has looked at the archaeology of women's communities while Henrietta Leyser in her social history of women in medieval England devotes two chapters to female religious setting the 'Brides of Christ' in the context of medieval society.[76] Kimm Curran has published on female religious communities in Scotland and the literature continues to grow.[77]

The intention of this chapter is to review the known history of Ainstable priory and drawing on the results of the research above suggest possible answers to some of the questions that arise, ie, when and by whom was the priory founded, what was behind the 'spurious' foundation charter of Edward IV and what was the association of the nuns with Nunclose which was specifically mentioned in the confirmation of 1473.[78]

Medieval England, London 1911, pp 177-181 and on-line at archive.org

64 The editor (HH) has compiled a volume of records for the priory, *Records of Armathwaite Priory,* accessible at archive.org.

65 *See* Bibliography in Thompson, Sally, *Women Religious,* (1991).

66 Power, E, *Medieval English Nunneries c.1275-1535,* (1922).

67 Power.

68 Eckenstein, L, *Women under Monasticism* (1896), *See* Thompson, Sally, (1991) 1.

69 F A Gasquet, *English Monastic Life,* London (1904), chap. IV.

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78 Caley, John, Ellis, Sir Henry, Bandinel, Rev Bulkeley. Eds. *Monasticon Anglicanum.*(1844). vol 5.

To the sources in the *VCH* can be added the *Mappa Mundi* by Gervas of Canterbury,[79] a payment of 1 mark to the 'nuns of Ermithwaite in Cumberland' by King John on 21 June 1212,[80] and to the list of prioresses the name of Amabel (*Mabel*) from a charter in the Aglionby Papers, who let land at Aynstepelyth, to Geoffrey, the son of Roger.[81]

Gervas lists religious houses under counties in England and bishoprics in Wales but Cumberland and Westmorland as counties are omitted. The priory at Ainstable can be identified as 'Prioratus, Inglewode, Saancte Maries, Moniales Nigrae' listed under Richmuntsire. Stubbs, the editor of *Gervase*, advised his readers not to put much reliance on the *Mappa Mundi* as an accurate table of religious houses noting that the manuscript is undated and written by at least two different hands. Knowles while acknowledging the shortcomings, considered Gervases' list as worthy of attention and analysed the religious houses with their known foundation dates and his findings help a little towards a better understanding of the founding of Ainstable priory.[82] Working out a possible date for the *Mappa Mundi* Knowles made several observations; the list of autonomous Benedictine houses is practically complete with none of those listed founded after 1201 and of houses of other Orders in the *Mappa*, none listed was founded after 1200. He therefore concluded that the list could not have been drawn up after January 1201. However there are omissions of houses known to have been founded before 1201 and suggests that the omission of the Cistercian houses Furness, Calder[83] and Whalley, and Augustinian Cartmel and Lanercost was due to their remote positions in the far north-west.[84] Benedictine Wetherhal (c.1106) and St Bees (+1120) may have been omitted because both were regarded as cells of St Mary's, York, and no cells or alien priories appear in the list. Premonstratensian Shap (c.1201) may have been too late as was Benedictine nunnery of Seton (1190-1200). Holm Cultram is listed, founded in 1150 by Henry, son of David, King of Scots while Cumberland was under his father's rule and Knowles identifies *Carduil* as Carlisle (1122) and *Cungeshefed* as Conishead (1154-1181), both Augustinian.[85] In conclusion Knowles goes as far as suggesting the list was compiled before 1200 and it is reasonable to suggest that the compilation could have been done any time in the preceding twenty years back to c.1180.

Collaboration of a pre-1200 date for Armathwaite is given by a grant to the priory of St Bees by Roger de Bellocampo (*Beauchamp*) which refers to a plot of land in Seascales in West Cumberland that belonged to the priory.[86] It is undated but Wilson ascribes it to 1200x1229 on the basis of what is known of the grantor but it could have been earlier. In the *Register of the Priory of Wetherhal* there are three grants of land in Ainstable that refer to the land of the nuns, all undated but ascribed on the basis of the witness list to the mid-13th century.[87] The first firm date for the priory is the payment of 1 mark to the nuns of 'Ermitethwaite' by King John on 21 June 1212.[88]

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79 Stubbs, William ed., *Gervas of Canterbury,* ii, 441, (*Rolls Series 1879-80*).

80 Cole, H ed., *Documents illustrative of English History in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, selected from the Records of the Department of the Queen's Remembrancer of the Exchequer* (Record Commission; London, 1844) p234, from *Rotulus Misæ anni regni Regis Johannis*, 1212- 13, 14 John.

81 D/AY1/5-8(6), CAC. This is the only known extant charter for the nunnery.

82 Knowles, Dom David, 'Gervase and the Mappa Mundi', *Downside Review,* n.d. 237-247.

83 *Egremunt B(enedictine)* is on the list, Knowles suggests this is Egremont and as there was no known house there it could possibly be Calder but St Bees is more probable as it is nearer and Benedictine.

84 This is not convincing as the Cumbrian houses that are listed were even more remote.

85 *MRH*, 255; *VCH* ii.

86 J Wilson, ed. *The Register of the Priory of St Bees,* Surtees Society, vol. 126 (1915) no. 56.

87 J E Prescott, ed. *The Register of the Priory of Wetheral,* Kendal (1897). 163, 166, 169. See 'Manuscript Register of Wetherhal and the Transcripts', xl-xliv, for history of the *Register.*

88 In the Preface vii, the editor states that payment of alms frequently occur on the roll especially to nuns in the parts of the country traversed by the royal presence. The nuns of Lambley in Northumberland also received 1 mark.

Before turning to the foundation charter dismissed as 'spurious' by Freeman it is necessary to look briefly at the history of women religious in England up to 1200.

Thompson shows that while several convents probably evolved from a group around an anchoress or hermit or were 'propagated' from another institution most had or claimed a founder.[89] And while a few nunneries were founded by the king and others of high rank to provide a home for aristocratic ladies wishing to lead a religious life most did not have a noble or even a wealthy founder. Evidence from the over seventy nunneries founded after the Conquest shows that they were founded by local lords who held neither title nor high office. Of course, there were exceptions, in Northumbria Robert de Umfraville a Norman baron, is reputed to have founded Holystone before 1124 but that is rare, in Yorkshire where there were twenty-four nunneries only one was founded by a member of the baronial class.[90] Lampley in Northumbria probably was founded by the lord of Tindale, Adam de Tindale,[91] Seaton the other nunnery in Cumbria, was founded by the lord of Millom but they were not of the first rank. Further more, for a number of nunneries including Armathwaite, the scarcity of documents means a single founder cannot be identified and for others the claim is doubtful as the quoted document is a confirmation and not a foundation charter. In some cases a nunnery may have been the outcome of a collective of local families. In addition as nuns needed men as priests to administer to their spiritual needs, to take mass, hear confessions and bury the dead after1300 they also needed male help to write letters and petitions and representation in court.[92] In some nunneries a chaplain might 'live-in' and provide both spiritual guidance and secular help although a resident clerk was discouraged after the 12th century as bishops took more control over their dioceses.

Thompson highlights the tendency for a tradition to develop that elevated the founder to a higher rank or position, the top person being of course the king as happened at Armathwaite; here in 1473, the Edward's IV's 'renowned ancestors' are named as founders and he as patron.[93]

The reasons why women wished to live a religious life, that is one dedicated to the work of God, have been widely discussed in the literature and continues.[94] The description 'religious women' includes both those who sought a life in an institution, that is the cenobitic form and those who chose solitary life as a hermits or anchoress, the eremitic form.[95] The two forms existed concurrently in England and while Thompson suggests that some early groupings of religious women around a hermit or anchoress developed into a more formal establishment even eventually obtaining episcopal approval, and some women continued to follow the eremitic life.[96] These women show there was a demand for a vocational life dedicated to the work of God however the

89 Chap. 2 and 3 and Appendix A.

90 Burton, *Yorkshire Nunneries,* 24. *VCH Cumb.*

91 *MRH,* 260. Site approximately 10km SW of Haltwhistle by the River South Tyne.

92 See Elizabeth Makowski, *English Nuns and the Law in the Middle Ages: Cloistered Nuns and Their Lawyers, 1293-1540,* Boydell (2011.), the 'Introduction' gives a useful summary.

93 *CPR 13 Edw IV* 392; *Monasticon,* iii 271-2.

94 *See:* Eileen Power, *Medieval English Nunneries,* New York (Cambridge reprint 1964), chap.1; Sharon K Elkins, *Holy Women of Twelfth Century England,* London (1988). Elkins aimed at providing a 'companion' to Knowles 'who was able to avoid discussing female religious in his books on monasticism;' Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300,* Cambridge (1994) chap. 5; Henrietta Leyser, *Mediieval Women:A Social History of Women in England 450-1500,* London (1995) chaps. 9/10. For an up to date bibliography *see* http://www.history.ac.uk/history-women-religious/bibliography/medieval.

95 For discussion on the meanings of 'hermit' and 'anchoress' *see* Rotha Mary Clay, *The Hermits and Anchorites of England,* London (1913), available free from Historyfish.net among several sources; Elkins p15 or more fully, Warren, p8 as *below.*

96 *See* Rotha, Mary Clay; Ann K Warren, *Anchorites and Their Patrons in Medieval England,* University of California Press, (1985) extends Clay's work. C H Talbot ed. *Life of Christina – The Life of Christina of Markyate, a Twelfth Century Recluse,* Oxford (1987 corr. repr.) is an account of a famous medieval woman recluse.

majority of nuns were women who were sent or advised to enter, might be a kinder term, to a nunnery, as the only honourable occupation available to daughters of upper and middling families who were not marriageable. Power gives examples of women who faced this future to the extent that fathers in their wills offered a dowry if a daughter married and a lesser dowry if they went into a convent.[97] At the lower end of the social scale the daughter of a peasant free or bound,[98] or an artisan or a tradesman, had more choices of occupation which if not very attractive to modern women, were wider than those open to women higher up the scale; they also had more independence to choose. Their labour was valuable on the family holding or in an ancillary trade the most common of which was brewing and selling of ale, they could seek work as a servant for a local employer including a convent or as a seasonal labourer for the multitude of agricultural tasks that needed to be done each year.[99] That is not to say that there were not women from peasant families who sought and pursued a religious vocation but without some education and their own money or a generous patron, they would have found entry to a nunnery to become a nun nearly impossible although they could serve as a lay-sister.

Origins – A Hermitage?

As mentioned above, the majority of medieval nunneries were founded by 'middling' families but Venbarde for France and England[100] and Thompson for England[101] show that several convents evolved from a group that had gathered around an anchoress or hermit, Thompson tentatively suggests that may have been the origin of Armathwaite. In western France a famous hermit whose story was well known to Henry II, was Robert of Arbrissel (c.1045 –1116) who lived in the forest of Craon south-west of Laval. Robert attracted many followers, particularly women for whom in 1096 he founded the monastery of La Roé and which after intervention by the local bishop, moved to Fontevrault in the Loire Valley as a double house for women and men ruled by the abbess. Henry's queen Eleanor of Aquitaine ended her days there as nun and Henry is buried beside her in the church.[102]

In England, the story of Christina of Markyate is also well known; as a young girl Christina felt the call of God, fell out with her parents and left home to spend time with other recluses including a hermit called Roger. She became an anchorite and a group of women gathered around her eventually developing as a community which became the priory of Markyate.[103] In the North according to Mackenzie (1827, 118-123), the nunnery of St Bartholomew in Newcastle-upon-Tyne began as a gathering of "fair devotees" in the ruins of what was then known as Monkchester following the visit of three missionaries from the south. Hermits in Cumbria have been listed by Clay[104] at Dalston, Denton,[105] Derwentwater, Holme Cultram, Islekirk, Kirkland ("on the east of Eden",) Linstock, Sebergham and Wragmire in Cumberland and Kendal, Windermere and Shap in Westmorland.[106] Clay relied on documentary sources available to her but there must have been other hermits; the place-name Armathwaite from 'hermit' and 'clearing', suggests there had been a hermit thereabouts at Armathwaite while Armathwaite Hall, Bassenthwaite, also suggests there had been a

97 Chap.1. Two women 'went to be made nuns at Armathwaite priory' in 1363 and 1368; *see Records of Armathwaite Priory*, 26 and 27.

98 C Dyer's definition of peasant .

99 Henrietta Leyser, *Medieval Women: A Social History of Women in England 450-1500*. (London 1995) chap. 7.

100 Venarde, Bruce, 57-62.

101 Chap. 2 and 3.

102 For the Fantevrault houses in England see *MRH,*104-5. The double abbey at Fantevrault forms an impressive complex.

103 Thompson 16-24.

104 Clay 27, 210-11, 252-3.

105 Nether Denton, a Brother Lysing held a hermitage probably near Chapelburn (NY598 646), *Lanercost* No. 57.

106 The hermit at Shap was left one mark in the will of Lady Agnes Clifford, [BL Harley Ch 48 C 25].

hermitage in the vicinity[107] although Hutchinson[108] conjectured that the name might have derived from from British *Ar* for field and Saxon *thwaite* for clearing. Near Little Asby there is a wood called Armaside Wood (NY702085) which may be derived from **ermite** 'hermit'.[109] Nicolson and Burn record a chapel dedicated to St Leonard in Little Asby. The 'Gaints Cave' (NY561303) above the river Eamont and opposite to St Ninian's Church, Brougham, once may have been a hermitage.[110] And there may have been others of which nothing is now known. Hermits in all ages sought out remote places following the tradition of asceticism and the origins of monasticism in the deserts of Egypt, Palestine and Syria. In Northern Europe where there were no deserts those seeking an eremitic life took to forests and islands often and perhaps unintentionally, creating the nucleus of a religious community. The best preserved of these early isolated communities in the British Isles are on the west coast of Ireland of which Skellig Michael is the most famous.[111]

Four of the Cumbrian hermits listed by Clay - Dalston, Linstock, Sebergham and Wragmire, lived either on the edge of or within Inglewood forest and two, at Derwentwater and Windermere, on islands. None of these appear to have been the catalyst for a community and no women are recorded as being associated with them, but that is no surprise, the story of Christian of Markyate is only known through the survival of a fourteenth century manuscript. The hermitage of St Andrew at Kirkland (Cumberland) is mentioned by Nicolson,[112] an Adam de Hermesthwayt who witnessed a charter of Wetherhal Priory c.1240-47 was probably the chaplain of the priory.[113]Although none of the male monasteries in Cumbria had an origin with a hermit the Premonstratensian abbey of Cockersand, the mother house of Shap abbey, evolved from a hermitage to a hospital and then to an abbey. Shap itself may have evolved from a cell of canons serving a chapel or hospital by the Peasey Beck in Preston Patrick.

Why the nunnery became known as Armathwaite when the place-name is some 5.0 kilometres downstream from the site and on the opposite of the river Eden is not known but a connection with a hermitage cannot be dismissed. The location of the hermitage can only be conjectured, two possibilities are considered here - beside Croglin Water at or near the final site or beside the Eden at modern Armathwaite? The site of the priory above the Croglin Water and alongside the road from Kirkoswald would have been an attractive location for a hermit to take up residence. Hermits were often associated with river crossings and bridges, Brother John de Corbrig was the poor hermit who worked on the repair of the crossing of Wragmire (NY450492),[114] and there must have been a long established river crossing of Croglin Water for the route from Kirkoswald to Ainstable.[115] In the field opposite Nunnery tradition has it there was a chapel and its position on the boundary between the parishes of Ainstable and Kirkoswald suggests it could have been a wayfarers' chapel or that of hermit who looked after the ford across Croglin Water.[116] A site for a hermit at Armathwaite is more problematical as only the place-name survives, there is no tradition of a chapel close by although

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107 *Place-Names,* 168, 263.
108 I, 494.
109 *Place-Names,* pt 2, 56.
110 Hutchinson II, 291.
111 The island provided a location for scenes in the *Star Wars* movies.
112 CAC, DCHA/11/10/2 Nicolson MSS, II, 135.
113 Prescott, *Wetherhal,* 45, 195, 233, 297.
114 Storey, *Register of Gilbert Welton,* 546.
115 Armathwaite bridge was in place by 1697 as was Croglin Low, otherwise Nunnery Bridge, H S Cowper, 'Ancient Bridges and Fords,' *CW1* XV 118.
116 HER 732. Ford: *N&B* I lxxxv. These are townships or hamlets. Nunclose appears in the muster list for Leath Ward, February 1581 [*Calendar of Border Papers vol 1 1560-95* (1894) 36-66.]

that does not mean there was not one.[117] Today the river Eden at Armathwaite is deep and fast flowing and fordable only in dry weather, in the 16th century a ford called 'Paytwath' was to be watched by four persons from the townships of Ainstable, Armathwaite, Nunclose and Hodelcruke 2.5 kilometres downstream where the river passes over shallow rapids at Holm Wrangle; two fords are recorded there in the 16th century[118] but upstream there is none until the bridge at Lazonby.[119]

Who were the nuns?

So who were the nuns of Armathwaite and where did they come from? For male monasteries it is possible to abstract the names of quite a number of inmates: bishop's registers for example contain lists of those admitted to the priesthood, the presentation of vicars to appropriated parish churches; the *Valor Eccelisticus* gives the incumbents of parishes some of whom could be members of the monastery holding the advowson; the reports of Cromwell's agents name inmates who are alleged for misbehaviour or who wished to leave the religious life and the Dissolution Accounts name those in receipt of pensions.[120] Nuns do appear occasionally in all these sources usually as prioresses and office holders but sometimes as individuals in wills and as mentioned below, as partners in scandal. Prioresses were mostly women from aristocratic and gentry families and of the six known prioresses of Armathwaite, four have a second name which gives a clue as to their background: Katherine de Lancaster, elected 1362; Isabel Otteley, died 1507; Agnes or Annis Elvyngton, died 1507 and Agnes or Anne Derwentwater, occurs 1535, 1537.[121] Katherine de Lancaster was probably of the de Lancaster family which by the mid-fourteenth century, was wide spread in north Westmorland with branches recorded as holding manors at Sockbridge, Barton and Howgill.[122] Isabel Otteley could have been of the family that derived its name from Otley in West Yorkshire[123] while Agnes Elvyngton could well have come from a family deriving its name from Elvington in the East Riding.[124] Anne Derwentwater was probably of the Derwentwater family who originated from Keswick although the main male line died out through the marriage of Margaret Derwentwater to Sir Nicholas Ratcliffe of Dilston, Northumberland.[125] Beyond these possible connections it is not wise to speculate.

For the nuns of Armathwaite, three are known for certain, Cecily Dryng(e) who was sub-prioress when Katherine de Lancastre was elected prioress,[126,127] and Galforde Chambres and Annets Margarete Standley who were given pensions of 16s 8d and 10s per annum respectively at the Dissolution.[128] There are two possibilities in 1378 Joan de London (a nun) was left a hood of black cloth and a pledge of 2 copper in the will of another Joan de London. This Joan was most probably

117 There were hundreds of chapels in medieval England many of which disappeared after the Dissolution and after, in many communities the new non-conformist societies built chapels.

118 *N&B* I lxxxv. *Selections from Household Books of the Lord William Howard of Naworth Castle,* I50, 61.

119 H S Cowper, 'Ancient Bridges and Fords', *CW1* xv 114-132.

120 For example see Harry Hawkins, *Records of Shap Abbey,* unpublished MS (copies in CAC, Kendal, Shap Heritage Centre and at Archive.org where the names of some 80 canons of the monastery can be found.

121 *VCH.*

122 *N&B* II index.

123 Eilbert Ekwall, *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Place-Names,* Oxford (4th. Ed. 1960) 352, gives *Oteleia* 1198 and *Otteleia* 1212.

124 Ekwell, 166.

125 *N&B* II 78/9. W N Thompson 'The Derwentwaters and the Radcliffes', *CW1* IV 288-329, fn. 298.

126 *VCH* lists five prioresses to which must be added Amabilla (*Mabel*), CAC Carlisle, D AY 1/5-8.

127 R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton, 1353-1362***,** 487 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88.)

128 J Wilson, 'The Tudor Disestablishment', *CW1* xiii 381.

the wife of William de London of Carlisle who in his will of 1377 had left the nuns of Armathwaite 3s 4d. Joan the nun, most likely was a relative and could have been a member of the community at Armathwaite as the nearest nunnery to Carlisle but equally she could have been a member at St Bartholomew, Newcastle upon Tyne, as William left the nuns there a psalter and 6s.8d.[129] A second possibility is Alice de Culwen, a nun, whose relations in 1334 with M William de Kendale, archdeacon of Carlisle 'caused public scandal,' he was instructed to have no further communication with her, under penalty of 100 marks.[130] As Armathwaite was the only nunnery in the Carlisle diocese and only some twelve miles distant it is likely that Alice was a member there. Her second name suggests she was of the family of de Culwen, lords of Workington founders of Shap Abbey. Two women both called Alice, are recorded as being sent to E(A)rmathwaite to be made nuns by their fathers in statements of proof of age made to Inquisitions Post-Mortem; John Warde the younger, swore his daughter Alice was sent to be made a nun in the same day as John de Kirkby Thore was born[131] and Alice daughter of John de Vaux of Caterlen, was sent to be made a nun in 1347 when John de Hotoun Roof was born.[132]

The Founder?

The scarcity of records for Armathwaite and indeed for all the nunneries of England, Wales and Scotland, also make it very difficult to place the community in the context of their locality. The founder, if there was one, is unknown as are those who gave the priory its lands. However in the mid-fourteenth century seven people are recorded as making gifts to the priory in their wills: in 1356 Lady Agnes, wife of Sir Robert le Denton left the nuns 10s; in 1359, John de Salkeld of Maughonby left the prioress and her sisters, 40s; in 1362 Richard de Ulnesby, rector of Ousby generously left them a cow at Ousby (one wonders if they ever collected it or sold it locally);[133] Thomas de Anandale, rector of Asby, in his will dated 18 November 1374, left the nuns of Armathwaite, 20s; as mentioned above, William de London, citizen of the city of Carlisle, in 1377, left the nuns 3s. 4d; Roger de Salkeld, left the nuns 6s 8d. in his will of 1379 and in 1386 John de Dounthwayt, left them 40s.[134] There must have been others whose wills are lost. That these wills are clustered in the thirty years from 1356 to 1386 is a subject worth exploring but there is insufficient space to do so here except to suggest that there may have been encouragement, maybe by the bishops of the time, for people to leave money to local religious houses as the nuns were not the only community to be mentioned.[135]

As mentioned above only one extant (probably a copy) document for the priory has been discovered and it is a gift by the prioress *Amabilla* and the chapter (more correctly a lease), of four acres of land in Ainstable which the priory had had by charter, in return for 2s cash of lawful money to be paid yearly in two equal installments. The document is written in Latin on thin parchment with the outline of a seal tag, it is dated by the text and handwriting, and the witness list, to 1250-1300.

It is not known as to who was Amabilla but an Amabilla together with her sister Alice and their brother Roger de Bellocampo (*Beauchamp*), is named in a dispute with the Abbot of St Mary, York, regarding a tenement in Cringeldic Unde (*Crindledyke* between Staffield and Little Croglin) dated

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129 R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395,* 465&495 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96).

130 R L Storey, *The Register of John Kirkby 1332-1352 and the Register of John Ross 1325-32,* vol I 262 (C&Y Soc. Vol 81.)

131 *Cal IPM 37 Edward III,* vol XI, 474.

132 *Cal IPM 41 Edward III,* 181.

133 R L Storey, *The Register of Gilbert Welton, 1353-1362***,** 144, 231, 434 (C&Y Soc. Vol 88.)

134 R L Storey, *The Register of Thomas Appleby 1363-1395,* 317, 465, 505, 643 (C&Y Soc. Vol 96.)

135 Insert about wills generally after this period.

to 20 October 1241.[136] The Roger de Bellocampo named here is not he who was lord of Croglin and Staffield and who married Grecia widow of Thomas son of Gospatrick, and died 1223-28 but probably his son, if so, Amabilla the prioress, was a most probably a Bellocampo.[137]

As the only surviving grant for the priory the list of witnesses is of considerable interest, they were:

> Sir Michael de Hertecla, Sir William de Boymle, Sir John de T(er)riby, knights, John de Staffol, Robert de Croglon, Adam de Hot(t)on of Aeynby, Alan de Ulnesby, John de Salkeld and others [not named.] All were local men who were prominent in Cumberland and north Westmorland from around 1253 until at least 1300. Michael de Hertecla is most likely Michael Harcla who witnessed a grant to Byland Abbey 1258x1267 [*Cartulary,* 69] and acted as sheriff of Cumberland 1285-98 and died before 1309 [*ODNB*.] He appears as a witness to a number of documents listed in N&B and *RK* ii and *RK* iv.[138] In 1285/6 he appears as a witness with John de Terriby above, to a grant by John de Ormeshved [N&B I 515]. From 1253 until 1281 he was in dispute with the bishops of Carlisle over the manor and church of Dalston. [N&B ii 260.] Prescott [*Reg of Wetheral* 155, n2] says he was a brother of Andrew Harcla, earl of Carlisle, who was attained for treason and executed in 1323 but this differs from the *ODNB* and other writers who say he was the father of Andrew Hercla. Between 1300 and 1320 a Michael de Harcla was in dispute with the abbot of Shap Abbey over dues out of the manor of Maulds Meaburn, it is possible this is the Michael Prescott thought was the brother of Andrew.[139]
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> William de Boymle (Boyvill) held Thursby in late Henry III (d. Nov 1272) [Denton 429] but his son held it in 1298/9 as this William appears to have died 1291. [N&B ii 201 and Prescott [*Reg,* 156, n7]. William de Boyvill held Ainstable of Richard Neville in late Henry III and when he died his son John sold it to Andrew Harcla [Denton 429]. He also was a witness to two grants to Lanercost Priory [*Cartulary* 222, 224].
>
> John de Terriby (Tarraby, Teeribi, Terribi) was witness with among others, John son of John of Staffole, to two grants of land in Ainstable to Lanercost [*Cartulary* 73, 74] which are dated to 1222 and (1230x1256). In a third grant to Lanercost [*Cart.* 230, d. after 1273x1293] he appears with Robert of Croglin. He also appears as a witness to grants to Wetheral, [*Reg* nos 78, 83,] and for two with Michaele Hartcla, then sheriff of Cumberland [nos.110 and 111].[140]
>
> Robert of Croglin as steward of Gilsland, appears as a witness to two grants to Lanercost, *Cart.* 271, d.1294 and *Cart.* 302 d.1255x1289 to which John of Staffhole is also a witness.
>
> The five men, Michaele de Harctecla, William de Boyville, John de Terriby, Roberto de Croglin and John de Staffol appear together as witnesses to two other grants to Wetheral [*Reg* 190 d.1285x98, 78 d.1260x1285].

That these five also witnessed a number of the grants to Wetheral Priory shows considerable support among the local gentry for the nunnery and probably at the time, from the monks of Wetheral. Witness lists are not infallible in that the people whose names appear may not actually have been present or had even seen the document, the difficulty in getting together a group to witness the conveyance of what was after all a small piece of property must have been quite large. However such lists were important to testify the authenticity of the conveyance and to impress any who

136 *Register of Wetherhal,* 173.
137 *Ibid* 153.
138 *RK:* Records of Kendal.
139 *Records of Shap Abbey.* F W Ragg, 'De Veteriponte, le Franceys and de Vernon', *CW2,* xii, 352-354.
140 A Henri de Terribi gave 7 acres and 3 rods of land in Ainstable to Wetherhal c.1236 (*Wetherhal* 166/7) and a William de Terribi gave 2 acres 1 rod and 15 perches probably a bit later (*ibid* 168). Slightly later again, Alice daughter of David de Terribi quitclaimed to Wetherhal and St Mary's, York, her interest in 2 acres next to the sheep fold of the nuns of Armathwaite in Scamelbrec (*ibid* 169).

should question the ownership of the property at a later time, even if some or all of the testators were dead. For the nuns of the priory the list shows to the wider community that they had the support of the important local dignitaries, in this case the list is headed by Michael Harcla one of the most important men of Carlisle in the second half of the thirteenth century. The support of the monks of Wetherhal was also important not only was their land in Ainstable intermingled with that of the nuns they were the nearest house with the skills and connections to help draw up and write charters.[141] However the support shown for the nunnery by local families in the 13th century does not provide any clues as to who was the founder: the witnesses were more involved with Lanercost than the nuns, why this should be could be no more than coincidence.

In speculating as to which local family may have been involved in the foundation of the nunnery it is necessary to try and unravel who was in a position to have sufficient resources in the second half of the 12th century to found a house of nuns. To do this it is important to try and establish in which lordship Ainstable, the township in which the priory lay. It was not in the barony of Gilsland but shared its northern boundary on North Gill with the southern boundary of the barony. According to Nicolson and Burn, the Gilsland barony was granted or confirmed to Adam son of Swein by Henry I, and originally covered parts of Kirkland and Kirkoswald parishes, including the manors of Blencarn, Culgaith, Kirkland, Kirkoswald and Melmerby but these parishes were separated at an unknown and early date through division and granting away of lands.[142] The lordship of Staffield which lies over the Croglin Water opposite the site of the priory was a fief of Kirkoswald.[143] Hutchinson gives the southern boundary of the Gilsland barony as following the Eden southwards to the Norscue beck (Northsceugh Beck) and then up that beck to the watershed.[144] When the barony was held by the Howards of Naworth in the 17th century Ainstable was associated with it as an 'outmanor'.[145] No baronial records survive but the descent of Gilsland barony is documented and the two families who held it in the period up to the first record of the priory of c.1200 were Gille son of Bueth, who held it until 1157/58, and Hubert de Vaux who was appointed by Henry II lord of Gilsland shortly after the king had regained the three northern counties from the Scots. Hubert de Vaux died about 1164 and was succeeded by his son Robert I who in turn was succeeded by his brother Ranulf in 1194 and then by his nephew Robert II in 1199.[146] If Gille had founded the nunnery it might be expected that the de Vauxs would take over the patronage but there is no record of Hubert doing so. His son Robert I founded Lanercost priory shortly after succeeding his father in 1165 and endowed it with the lands and churches that made up its principal wealth. His brother Ranulf gave nothing to Lanercost but his son Robert II extended the priory's rights and possessions.[147] Todd notes that the de Vauxs were not associated with the land held by Lanercost Priory in Ainstable, Croglin and Kirkoswald, a hint perhaps, that by 1165 the southern parishes listed above had already been separated and the de Vaux's had no interests there.[148]

There are three other families who must be considered in this speculative essay, the de Morvilles, the Bellocampos (*Beauchamp*) and the descendants of Adam son of Suan. The de Morvilles can be ruled out as possible founders as it appears they held no land in Ainstable. Ada Engaine, daughter and heiress of William Engaine of Isel, lord of Burgh by Sands married first Simon de Morville by

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141 For a study of the development of records and writing in medieval England *see* M T Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, Chichester (2013).

142 N&B II 429.

143 N&B II 426.

144 *Cumberland* I 45, fn.

145 *Cumbrian Manorial Records, Dictionary of Baronies and Superior Manors.*

146 Todd, *Lanercost*, pp. 1-5.

147 *Lanercost*, pp. 6-8.

148 *Lanercost* p12. Kirkoswald did come to form part of the holdings of the de Multons who succeeded the de Vaux as barons of Gilsland and eventually passed to the Dacres.

whom she had a son Hugh, when Simon died she married Robert I de Vaux mentioned above. She seems to have inherited a wide scatter of properties from the Solway to the middle Eden and gave generously to Lanercost Priory.[149] Her son Hugh de Morville who died 1202, confirmed his mother's gifts to Lanercost but made no separate gifts of his own to the priory leaving the weak possibility that he may have favoured the nuns at least with grants elsewhere.

Considering the Bellocampos although it is not possible to establish the relationships between the different Bellocampos who appear in documents of the late 12th century and the early 13th century, the name was prominent in north Cumberland and Westmorland during that period.[150] The earliest record of a Bellocampo is probably Reginaldo de Belcamp a witness to an undated but probably earlier than 1180 charter of Gospatrick son of Orm to St Bees Priory.[151] Richard de Bellocampo before 1200 was a witness with Hugh de Morville to a charter of Robert de Wall also to St Bees and to a charter of Thomas son of Gospatrick also to St Bees. Probably the same Richard was also a witness to a charter to Shap Abbey by Peter de Rosgill c.1201 x 1220.[152] Another Bellocampo, Thomas, was witness to a confirmation by Thomas de Lascel of King John's and King Henry's charters [nos. 217, 218] concerning the hermitage of St. Hilda in Inglewood Forest to Holm Cultram Abbey.[153] The most prominent Bellocampo was Roger, lord of Croglin and Staffield who married Grecia widow of Thomas son of Gospatrick, the founder of Shap Abbey and died 1223.[154] This Roger not only acted as a witness to charters but made grants to St Bees, Wetheral and Shap. He gave to St Bees two bovates in Seascale that abutted the land of the nunnery of Armathwaite[155] and he is surely the same who was a witness to the grant of Gilbert son of Roger son of Reinfred to Thomas son of Gospatric, of all his (Thomas's) lands in Kendal,[156] provided the canons of Shap with land to support a chaplain in his chapel at Knipe,[157] and also made a grant to them in his vill of Staffield.[158] Later he gave the abbey 'half a carucate of land in the vill of Shap 'from my mother's marriage-portion, in exchange for one carucate of land which they have in Snipp (*Knipe*) from my gift, etc.'[159] As mentioned above he had two daughters Alice and Amabilla, who in 1241, were involved in a dispute with the abbot of St Mary, York, over land at Cringledyke between Staffield and Croglin.[160] Certainly this Roger had the status and the land holdings to set up the nuns on their site just over the beck from his manor of Staffield but there is no evidence that he actually held land there. He seems to have had no male heir and thereafter the manor of Staffield was held by a family who took the place-name, a John de Staffole has been noted as a witness to the gift above.[161]

The strongest contenders are the descendants of Adam son of Suan or Suein. He held the parishes of Kirkland, Melmerby and Ainstable granted to him by Henry I and was also founder of the Cluniac priory of Monk Bretton in Yorkshire.[162] He also gave the hermitage of St Andrews in Culgaith to Wetherhal Priory before 1147.[163] His heirs were two daughters Amabil (Mabel) and Matilda; Amabil

149 *Lanercost*, 11.
150 *Ibid* 153. See also *Wetherhal*, nos. 153-4 fns; *St Bees*, pps. 63, 64, 67, 85, 86. 318, 384.
151 No. 33. Another witness is one R filio Tymte or Truite, an East Cumberland land-owner, whose name often appears in the *Pipe Rolls* from 1177 onwards.
152 *Records of Shap Abbey*, 26; F W Ragg, 'Shap and Rosgill and Some Early Owners', *CW2*, xiv, 1-62, 'Charter II'.
153 'The Register: Islekirk', *Register & Records of Holm Cultram* (1929), pp. 78-79. URL: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=49517 Date accessed: 31 January 2014.
154 As 61.
155 *St Bees*, 56.
156 *Records of Shap Abbey*, 4; F W Ragg, 'Shap and Rosgill and Some Early Owners', *CW2*, xiv, 'Charter A', 55-66.
157 *Ibid*, 10.
158 *Ibid*, 18.
159 *Ibid*, 24. In 25, Thomas, son of Thomas, son of Gospatric quitclaimed this gift to the abbey.
160 *Wetherhal* No.173
161 N&B ii 426.
162 Became Benedictine in c.1279, *MRH. VCH Yorkshire vol 3.*
163 *Wetherhal* No.196.

married first Alexander de Crevequer and secondly Galdfrid (Walter) de Nevill who was succeeded by another Walter de Nevill, presumably their son. In her turn Matilda married first Adam de Montbegon and then John Malherbe. In 1212, Ainstable was held jointly by cornage, ie. with no intermediate lord, by Roger de Begon son of Matilda and Adam, Simon son of Walter (de Neville) and Alexander de Neville.[164] Roger de Begon also made a grant to Monk Bretton Priory.

A probable story then for the foundation of the nunnery is that there was a hermit most likely with a small group of followers in an assart or clearing in Inglewood Forest which became Nunclose.[165] Sometime before 1200 they were given land in Ainstable to build a house above the Croglin Water where there may have already been a wayside chapel. The group however, retained their claim to the holding in the forest despite it being let out to tenants by the crown for some 250 years.

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[164] *Wetherhal*, No.14 fn.4. *VCH* I, *Testa de Nevill,* III 422.
[165] Hermits could be male or female. The story of Nunclose is Appendix C.